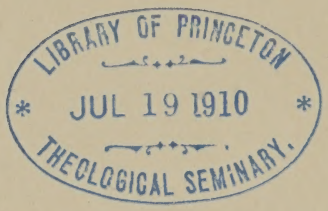

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Heroes of the Nations

EDITED BY

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FELLOW OF BALLIOL COLLEGE, OXFORD

FACTA DUCIS VIVENT OPEROSAQUE GLORIA RERUM.— OVID, IN LIVIAM, 285.

THE HERO'S DEEDS AND HARD-WON FAME SHALL LIVE.

AUGUSTUS CÆSAR



AUGUSTUS.

IN THE BRACCIO NUOVO, VATICAN LIBRARY, ROME.

AUGUSTUS CÆSAR

AND THE ORGANISATION OF THE EMPIRE OF ROME

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THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY.

BY

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G. P. PUTNAM'S SONS

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Uxori Meæ
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PREFACE

THERE is, so far as I have been able to ascertain, no biography in English of Augustus — a most curious fact when one considers the extraordinary success of his career and the enormous importance of the work which he accomplished. Perhaps the reason of this apparent neglect may be found in the circumstance that his character is one of the most puzzling of antiquity. The Emperor Julian compared him to a chameleon; Augustus himself signed his State papers with a ring bearing the device of a Sphinx. Both the man and his work remain "a contradiction still"; theory and practice in his case persistently refuse to be reconciled; one can rarely feel quite sure at any given point in Augustus's life that one knows exactly what he had in his mind. We know him best in the early portion of his career, when Cicero was still writing his incomparable letters and delivering his incomparable speeches. After Cicero's murder, the authorities become meagre and unsatisfactory. In this volume I have attempted to give a clear account of what Augustus achieved in the establishment of the Roman Empire, and at the same time to reveal the

man, in so far as he reveals himself by his actions. Augustus does not belong to the category of the world's great men who can be labelled with a single or a simple adjective.

This volume may be considered to some extent as a sequel to the earlier volume on Julius Cæsar in this series which was written by Mr. W. Warde Fowler. It also inevitably overlaps to a certain degree the volume on Cicero, written by Mr. J. L. Strachan-Davidson. I hope it may be found not wholly unworthy to take a place by the side of those two brilliant studies. My obligations to the innumerable scholars and historians who have worked and tilled the same ground before me are exceedingly great. For the earlier period I may specially mention the illuminative essays in the great Dublin edition of *The Letters of Cicero;* for the constitutional changes introduced by Augustus, Mr. A. H. J. Greenidge's *Roman Public Life;* and for the provincial administration, Professor Mommsen's well-known work, *The Provinces of the Roman Empire.*

J. B. F.

London, October, 1902.



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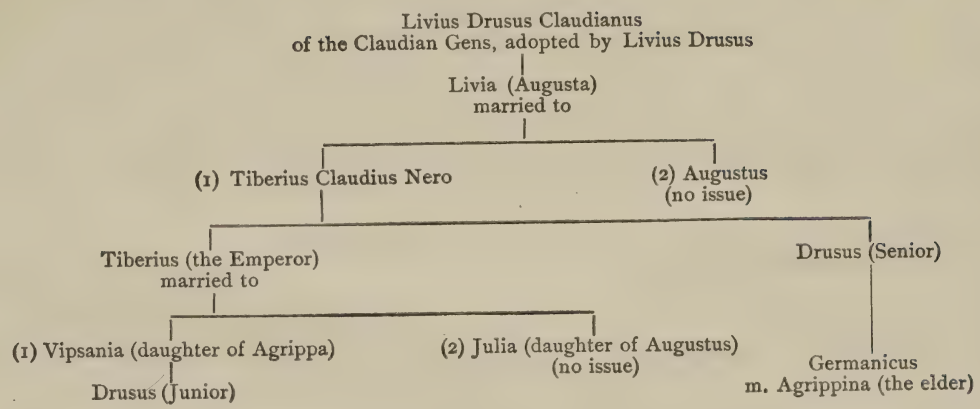
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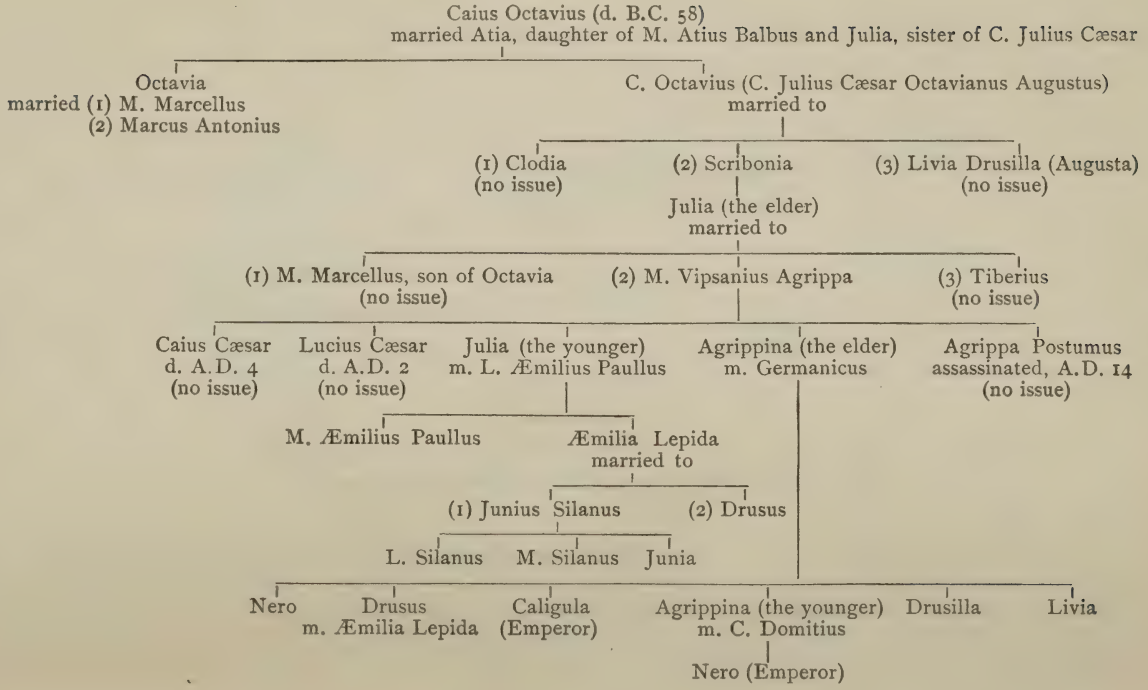
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FAMILY OF AUGUSTUS



AUGUSTUS CÆSAR

INTRODUCTION

THE SEQUEL TO THE IDES OF MARCH

March 15 to April 10, 44 B.C.

WHEN Julius Cæsar fell, pierced with twenty-three wounds, at the foot of Pompeius' statue in the Senate House at Rome, the Roman world was left without a master. The conspirators had slain the one man strong enough to evolve order out of the chaos into which the Republic had been plunged. They had destroyed Cæsar, and with him they had hoped to destroy Cæsarism. But the sole result of their act of assassination was to throw the State for a period of thirteen miserable years into a constant succession of civil wars, out of which emerged, triumphant and alone, the commanding figure of Augustus, who shattered for ever the Roman Republic, and founded upon its ruins the majestic structure of the Empire. Yet not one of those who took part in the tragedy of the Ides of March,

and not one of the leading statesmen of the day, seems to have given a passing thought to him who was to profit most by the crime which was then committed. Neither Brutus nor Cæsar, neither Antonius nor Lepidus, neither Cicero nor any of his associates, imagined that a youth who was pursuing his military studies at Apollonia was destined to set all their calculations at naught and to prove himself the ablest and strongest of them all. Octavius, however, does not enter upon the scene until a month after the assassination of his grand-uncle and adopted father, and it will be well, therefore, to describe in brief the course of events from the 15th of March, B.C. 44, down to the middle of April, when he returned to Italy.

It was a troubled and anxious time for all, but especially for the Republican chiefs. There is no occasion here to analyse the motives which had led Brutus, Cassius, and their fellow-conspirators to plot the assassination of Cæsar. They were men of widely different types; all had been generously treated by their victim, and most had been selected by him for high official posts. But it is important to lay stress upon their unanimous conviction that if only Julius were removed, the Republic might be restored upon its old footing, as it was prior to the outbreak of the civil war between Cæsar and Pompeius. They believed, in short, that the Roman people were at heart thoroughly devoted to the ancient constitution, and that, once Cæsar was put out of the way, the Senate would reassert its control of public affairs, and the oligarchical families, to which they them-

selves belonged, resume their wonted places in the State. But they had been rudely undeceived on the very day of the assassination. When they marched to the Forum from the Curia, waving their bloody daggers and crying out that they had slain the tyrant, they had been received with chilling silence. So far from being enthusiastically hailed as saviours of their country, the people held aloof from them; Cæsar's veterans had raised menacing shouts, and Marcus Brutus himself was scarcely vouchsafed a hearing. Hence they had slunk back to the Capitol, glad of the security which the presence of the swordsmen of Decimus Brutus afforded them. It was but little compensation for their bitter disappointment that Cicero and a number of other Senators climbed the hill of the Capitol to congratulate them on their deed and join their councils.

There they spent in fruitless debate the hours which should have been devoted to strenuous and decisive action. Acting on the recommendation of Brutus, they had spared Marcus Antonius, Cæsar's colleague in the consulship. Nor did they apprehend any danger from Lepidus, the Master of the Horse, who was just on the point of starting to take up his command in Gaul and Spain. They mistook their men. As soon as Antonius heard that Cæsar had fallen, he made himself secure in his house and opened communications with Lepidus, who assured him of support and moved a detachment of his troops into the city with orders to seize and hold the Forum. On the morning of the 16th, Antonius took steps to gain possession of Cæsar's private papers

and treasure, and laid hands upon the seven million sesterces which were stored in the Temple of Ops. The conspirators again harangued the people and again met with a frigid reception. Brutus declaimed against the tyranny of the dead usurper and boldly claimed the favour of his hearers on behalf of Sextus Pompeius and the banished defenders of the Republic. But there was no popular response, and he and his friends returned to the Capitol and there decided to treat with the Consul Antonius and request him to convene a meeting of the Senate for the following day.

The Senate, accordingly, met in the Temple of Tellus in the Carinæ and, surrounded by the cohorts of Lepidus, debated the question of the hour. The fate of Rome hung upon the decision that might be reached. The Liberators sought to obtain from the Senate a formal justification of their action, but dared not lay before the meeting the true alternative policies. A justification of the murder ought logically to have been accompanied by a reversal of Cæsar's decrees and Cæsar's official appointments. But they themselves held their appointments from Cæsar, and they had already recognised the succession of Dolabella, the Consul-designate, to the consulship which Cæsar's murder had just made vacant. They had no soldiers at their command, except the gladiators of Decimus Brutus, while the city was full of Cæsar's veterans, and the Forum was held by the troops of Lepidus, acting in concert with Antonius. The conspirators, therefore, realised the essential weakness of their position, and felt obliged to temporise, especially as

they were suspicious of Antonius, though he spoke them fair and promised to co-operate with them in the task of restoring order and public confidence. They were, in fact, practically helpless; the control of events had passed into other hands than theirs. Consequently, after many hours of anxious debate, the Senate passed an act of general amnesty, but confirmed the decrees and appointments of the dead Dictator. This was plainly a confession of weakness on the part of all the contending parties. Each wanted time to form new combinations; each felt that the chance of immediate success was too precarious to put fortune to the test. Antonius, Lepidus, and Cicero all urged the same course — to say nothing of the murder of Cæsar, to forget the past, and to begin again.

There could be no finality in a compromise which solved nothing. The refusal of the Senate to approve or condemn, as a body, an act which each Senator violently approved or violently condemned in his own conscience was dictated solely by the desire to evade a definite decision which was bound to lead to blows. The ratification of Cæsar's acts was a public confession that his régime was not destroyed; the amnesty granted "for the sake of peace" was a futile compromise which could not last. When, therefore, the friends of Cæsar boldly and successfully urged the Senate to sanction a public funeral, Atticus shrewdly observed to Cicero that "all was lost." It only needed a spark to light a conflagration. For the moment, however, a hollow truce was patched up. Lepidus banqueted Brutus,

and Antonius invited Cassius to sup with him. Then, on the morrow, the Senate formally confirmed the Liberators in the offices to which Cæsar had appointed them. Marcus Brutus was to proceed to Macedonia; Decimus to Cisalpine Gaul; Cassius to Syria; Trebonius to Asia, and Cimber to Bithynia, as soon as the year was out. But there were nine fateful months still to run before they could lawfully take up their respective commands; and, meanwhile, Brutus and Cassius were bound to remain in the city to fulfil their prætorian duties. They might flatter themselves with the certain prospect of military power when they reached their provinces, but for the remainder of the year Antonius was supreme. He was Consul; he had the legionaries of Lepidus at his beck and call; he had one brother among the prætors, and another among the tribunes; and, above all, he controlled the treasures of the State, which he skilfully employed to purchase the support of the doubtful and reward the services of his friends. The Senate entrusted him with the duty of superintending the public funeral of Cæsar, and providing against any breach of the peace.

How he carried out his instructions is known to every one from the pages of Plutarch and Shakespeare. When the funeral procession reached the Forum and the bier was placed before the rostrum, Antonius, as chief magistrate, stepped forward to pronounce the oration over the dead. With consummate skill he recited the honours which the Senate had heaped upon Cæsar, the titles they had showered upon him of "Consecrate," "Inviolable," "Father

of his Country." And the Senate had slain him! Claiming only to speak as the dead man's friend, he passionately declared that he was prepared to avenge the victim he had not been able to save. Then, when the Senators around him murmured their disapproval at the tone of his address, he artfully pretended to allay the dangerous passions he had aroused, by saying that Cæsar's death must have been a judgment of the gods. Divine power alone could have destroyed so potent a divinity and so god-like a man. Then, approaching the bier, he broke into a wild invocation, chanting the praises of the conqueror who had avenged the defeats of the Roman arms, and had never lost a battle. The waxen effigy, which shewed every red and gaping wound, was held aloft to excite the compassion of the vast assembly, and Antonius himself seized the blood-stained toga which Cæsar had worn on the Ides of March, and waved it in the air to display the rents made by the pitiless daggers. The clever actor had played his part well. He had roused his excitable hearers to a state of frenzy. The seething crowd in the Forum refused to allow the body of their murdered patron to be taken outside the walls to the Field of Mars. Cries were raised that the last rites should be performed in the adjoining Temple of Jupiter, and the ashes of the dead deposited at the shrine of the god. When the priests came forward and stayed this act of profanation, the crowd rushed into the neighbouring houses, stripped them of their benches and tables, and built the funeral pyre in the Forum itself. Overcome by uncontrollable emotion, Cæsar's

veterans cast their arms upon the blazing pyre; women and children threw their trinkets and jewels into the flames, and the body of the Dictator was consumed amid the lamentations of the whole people. Violence formed the inevitable accompaniment of this dramatic scene, and it was fortunate for Brutus and his friends that they had been wise enough to withdraw from public observation on so dangerous a day.

Antonius had raised the storm; it was Antonius who quelled it. But the tumult which he had so artfully contrived strengthened his position enormously. It helped to shatter the nerves — never very strong — of the Republicans and their sympathisers. After the scene in the Forum it was idle for Brutus and Cassius to delude themselves with the belief that the murder was popular with the people of Rome. Antonius, therefore, felt strong enough to invite them to his councils, and shew a conciliatory front. He summoned frequent meetings of the Senate, reassured the House by his constitutional procedure, and further gained its confidence by moving that the obnoxious office of Dictator should be for ever abolished. The proposal was carried by acclamation, and the attitude of the Consul seemed so frank and honest that Cicero was led to break out into the exulting cry that Rome was at length delivered not only from kingly rule, but even from all apprehension of it. Antonius pretended to be reconciled with his colleague, Dolabella, and the Senate voted him permission to enrol a body-guard of six thousand soldiers for his personal protection. He made good use of his power. Relying upon the



SPOT WHERE THE BODY OF JULIUS WAS CREMATED.

FROM LANCIANI'S "NEW TALES OF OLD ROME."

ratification of Cæsar's acts by the Senate, he boldly claimed the same authority for the notes and memoranda which he had found amongst Cæsar's papers and, when genuine memoranda were lacking, forged others to suit his purpose. The Senators had given themselves over, bound, into his hands, and even when they saw that they were being tricked their protests were ineffectual. The Consul ruled in the dead Cæsar's name and by the dead Cæsar's authority; surrounded by his six thousand swordsmen, he turned his mansion into a strong fortress, while the State treasure which he had seized in the Temple of Ops supplied him with abundant resources. So secure did he feel that he even quitted the city and proceeded to Campania to superintend a new assignment of lands to the veterans under the provisions of an agrarian law which his brother Lucius, the tribune, had brought forward. Meanwhile, his colleague, Dolabella, to whom he had left the administration of Rome, set to work to undermine his position, and levelled to the ground the monuments of Cæsar. During Antonius' absence the nobles again plucked up a momentary courage, and Cicero, from his villa at Puteoli, lauds Dolabella to the skies. "Our friend Dolabella is doing amazingly well," he writes; "he is quite one of us now." Thus, from day to day, the miserable round of intrigue went on until the middle of April, when Octavius returned to claim his patrimony.



CHAPTER I

OCTAVIUS CLAIMS HIS HERITAGE

April to July 44 B.C.

CAIUS OCTAVIUS, at this time a mere stripling of eighteen, was the grand-nephew of Julius Cæsar. His father, Caius Octavius the elder, who died when his son was but four years of age, had rendered good service to the State and had won the praise of Cicero for his just and vigorous administration of the province of Macedonia. He had married twice, his second wife being Atia, daughter of Marcus Atius Balbus and of Julia, the younger sister of Julius, and the only son of this marriage, was born in October of the year 63 B.C., during the consulship of Cicero and Caius Antonius. Suetonius narrates how on the day of his birth the Senate was deliberating on the conspiracy of Catiline, and the father came late to the meeting. His tardy arrival attracted attention, and Publius Nigidius, on hearing the cause and ascertaining the hour of the child's birth, at once declared, "The Lord of the World has been born." The story is almost certainly as apocryphal as the

others which are recorded of Octavius' boyhood, and we may be justly sceptical of portents and divine intimations which pretend to foretell the future career of those who subsequently achieve greatness. We are told, for example, how the child, who had been left one evening in his cradle on the ground floor of the house, was found the next morning in the turret of the roof, facing the rising sun; how, as soon as he began to speak, he bade the frogs cease their noisy croaking around his grandfather's country villa, and henceforth they croaked no more; how an eagle once swooped down and snatched from his hand a piece of bread, and then returned and restored the morsel; how Quintus Catulus dreamed that he had seen Jupiter himself place the Roman Republic in the lap of a boy, whom on the following day he recognised to be Octavius. Even Cicero is said to have dreamed that he saw Jupiter put a scourge in Octavius' hands; and Julius Cæsar was believed to have decided upon adopting him owing to an omen which he observed near the battle-field of Munda. More interesting still is the story of a visit paid by Octavius in Apollonia to the astrologer, Theogenes, in the company of his friend Agrippa. Agrippa was promised a magnificent and almost incredibly prosperous career, and, apprehensive lest a less radiant future should be in store for himself, Octavius at first refused to disclose the hour of his birth. His scruples, however, were eventually overcome, and he gave the necessary information, whereupon Theogenes leaped from his chair and worshipped him. Tales such as these, which, so far as history is aware,

were not made public until after Octavius attained to supreme power, scarcely deserve serious attention; but they are especially interesting in the case of one, who, throughout his long life, firmly believed that he was the favourite of Heaven.

Of the boyhood of Octavius little authentic is known. As a lad of twelve he delivered a funeral oration over the body of his grandmother Julia, and at the age of sixteen he assumed the toga of manhood. Then, shortly afterwards, when Julius Cæsar set out for his Spanish campaign against the Pompeians, Octavius gained some credit for the skill he displayed in making his way through a hostile country to join his uncle, with a few companions who had been shipwrecked with him during the voyage to Spain. That campaign concluded, Cæsar busied himself with his preparations for the projected war against the Dacians and the Parthians, and sent his nephew to Apollonia, in Epirus, there to complete his military studies. It was in Apollonia that he heard the news of Cæsar's murder from a messenger despatched hotfoot by his mother to carry the dreadful tidings. He had, therefore, to decide immediately upon his course of action in circumstances of exceptional difficulty. Many alternatives offered, but all must have seemed almost equally perilous. Removed as he was from the capital, where the state of parties changed from hour to hour and no one knew what the morrow would bring forth, he can have had no trustworthy information to guide him. If even the principal actors in the drama at Rome could not look twenty-four hours ahead, Octa-



THE YOUNG AUGUSTUS.

FROM THE BUST IN THE VATICAN.

(*Baumeister.*)

vius in Epirus must have been tormented with cruel perplexity. Possibly he did not even know that his uncle had made him his principal heir. Julius, when he drew up his will, was in the prime of life and might still hope for a son; and, though Octavius was his favourite nephew, there is no ground for believing that he had encouraged the youth to expect the reversion of his political supremacy. Whatever ambitious schemes, therefore, the young student at Apollonia may have revolved in his mind, he must have heard of Cæsar's assassination with feelings of dismay. His mother, Atia, urged him to repair at once to Rome, though, when she wrote, she did not know the contents of Cæsar's will. Yet, when he laid this plan before his friends at Apollonia, they counselled him not to undertake so hazardous a journey. Marcus Agrippa, a youth of his own age, and Quintus Salvidienus recommended him to present himself to Cæsar's legions quartered in Epirus and ask for their protection, and some of the officers of these troops invited him to place himself at their head. There is little doubt that they would have welcomed him with alacrity, but such a step would have been interpreted as a challenge to civil war and would have placed him in an essentially false position. He decided, therefore, to put this dangerous counsel on one side and make his way to Rome. The decision was justified by the result. Octavius had no official status; he was the recognised head of no party; he was merely a private citizen and kinsman of the dead Cæsar; and, as we have seen, the intriguers at Rome do not seem

to have included the possible ambitions of Octavius in their calculations and never imagined that within a few months he would be a factor in the State with whom they one and all would have to reckon.

He made no parade of his coming. So anxious was he not to attract attention that, instead of landing at Brundisium, he put in at the obscure little port of Lupia, where he learnt that Cæsar had made him his principal heir and left him a gigantic fortune. He learnt, too, of the extraordinary state of affairs at Rome, of the ascendancy of Antonius, and the radical weakness of the Republican party and their leaders. Octavius was still a boy of eighteen, but though his years were few and his experience limited, he possessed the true instinct of statesmanship and boldly mapped out for himself the policy which he intended to pursue. As Cæsar's heir, he would claim his patrimony in the ordinary legal and constitutional way. And as the very name of Cæsar would prove a powerful political weapon to help his ambitions forward, he assumed the title of Caius Julius Cæsar Octavianus, and presented himself as a Cæsar to the garrison of Brundisium. Many of his friends, sure that one so inexperienced as he could not combat successfully the perils and difficulties before him, prophesied that he would share the fate of Julius. But they little understood the character of him upon whom they urged their timid counsel. Octavian was a born intriguer and saw that there was room even for a late comer in the struggle.

In the first place, there was no natural head of the constitutional party. The ranks of the Optimates

had been sadly thinned in the late Civil War, and many of its ablest leaders had been slain. The survivors were jealous of one another, and especially jealous of Cicero. Brutus was only the titular leader of the little knot of Senators who had been privy to the conspiracy, and, since the Ides of March, he had given repeated proofs of weakness rather than of strength. There were few staunch, uncompromising Republicans in the Senate, though there were many with definite Republican leanings, who could occasionally be warmed into vigorous applause and a shew of resolute action under the spell of Cicero's eloquence. But the majority of its members were anxious only to join the winning side and seem to have lent their active support to Cicero, to Antonius, and to Dolabella, according as each of these in turn appeared to be upon the crest of the wave. The events of the past month had also proved, beyond doubt, that the murder of Cæsar was, on the whole, condemned by public opinion. Those who approved it were lukewarm and timid; those who denounced it were hot for vengeance and carried swords. It had not excited any spontaneous outburst of enthusiasm in favour of the tyrannicides, for the people of Rome had never regarded Julius as a tyrant. He had not restricted their liberties, whatever blows he had administered to the oligarchs, and they were not disposed to make the quarrel of the Senate their own. Cæsar had won victories; he had flattered their pride by extending the limits of the Republic; he had shewn himself a chivalrous and magnanimous victor in his struggle with Pompeius; he had tolerated no

proscription; he had proved himself a generous and bountiful patron. It was not alone the veteran soldiers of his grand army who lamented his death and cursed his murderers; and it is to this that must be ascribed the success with which Antonius had contrived to obtain the dominating position which he held when Octavian returned to Italy. He was Consul, it is true, and he had the support of Lepidus; but it was as the friend of Cæsar, the lieutenant of Cæsar, and the inheritor of Cæsar's policy that he was able to checkmate with such amazing ease the designs of the Liberators. Octavian, therefore, might reasonably expect that when he appeared as Julius's heir and adopted son he would attract to himself the support of a large section of the Cæsarians, and would start with the good wishes of all who sincerely lamented the tragedy of the Ides of March.

His first act had been to assume the name of Cæsar. Yet, while he deliberately chose this title, which the career of Julius had already made almost incompatible with the maintenance of a private station, he disavowed all political ambition, and gave out that his sole object was to secure his patrimony. He at once transmitted to the Senate and to Antonius his claim to his inheritance, and, suppressing the zeal of the veterans who flocked to join him, he made his way slowly towards Rome, accompanied only by a small retinue of personal friends. He travelled by a circuitous route, for we find him at Naples on April 18th, and he took the opportunity of calling upon Cicero in his neighbouring villa at Puteoli. It was no chance visit that he then paid. Octavian

was anxious to make friends and to disarm opposition in the ranks of the Optimates. He knew that Antonius would do his best to keep him out of his inheritance; if, therefore, he could secure the support, or even the neutrality, of Cicero, his position would be the stronger when he reached the capital.

The letters written by Cicero to Atticus during the first half of April shew that the veteran statesman was depressed and morbidly anxious at the turn which events had taken. The triumph of Antonius worried him. "You see," he writes on April 11th, "after all, the tyrant's hangers-on in enjoyment of *imperium;* you see his armies and his veterans on our flank." Or, again, "The only result of our policy is that we stand in awe of the conquered party." The Liberators had quitted Rome and left the field to Antonius; Cicero's only consolation is the memory of the Ides of March. Again and again that ominous phrase appears in his correspondence. The present may be dark and the future desperate, but he turns for satisfaction to the past, and tries to console himself with the thought that he has witnessed the slaying of a tyrant. From Octavian he expects little danger. "Are the people flocking to see him?" he writes on the 11th. "Is there any suspicion that he is meditating a coup? For my own part, I don't expect it." A week later Balbus, who had visited Octavian, came to tell Cicero the result of the interview, and announced that Octavian intended to accept the inheritance. Cicero foresees from this only that there will be "a fine scrimmage with Antonius." He was then at

Puteoli, where Balbus, Hirtius, and Pansa were staying with him as his guests. The adjoining villa was owned by Philippus, the step-father of Octavian, and thither the young aspirant betook himself. "He is quite devoted to me," wrote Cicero on the 21st. There had been an interchange of visits, and Octavian had been careful to pay to Cicero the deference which Cicero loved. He had asked for counsel and advice; he had taken pains to conciliate his favour, and, when politics were mentioned, had kept a strict guard upon his tongue. Octavian must have known perfectly well how eagerly Cicero applauded the murder of Cæsar, and how absolutely he had thrown in his lot with the Liberators. But at such a moment he would keep his ambitions well in the background, and speak only of his desire to obtain his rightful inheritance. Doubtless the young dissembler expressed to Cicero his entire acceptance of the amnesty passed by the Senate, and disavowed in the strongest terms any intention of seeking to avenge his uncle's death. We can imagine him solemnly protesting his overwhelming desire for peace and settled government and his readiness to support Cicero in his efforts to restore the reins of power to the Optimates. "Octavian treats me with great respect and friendliness," says Cicero on the 22d, though he is not wholly convinced of the honesty of his intentions. The assumption of the hated name, Cæsar, keeps his suspicions alive. He mistrusts the associates by whom Octavian is surrounded, for they are always threatening "Our Friends" with death. "How can he be a good citizen," he asks,

"with such a name and such a following? The idea is impossible." And then he adds: "Octavian says the present state of things is intolerable. But what do you think when a boy like that goes to Rome, where even our Liberators are not safe?" In brief, the result of the meeting between Octavian and Cicero at Puteoli was that Cicero, despite his suspicions, was flattered by the young man's attentions, and was encouraged to hope that he might influence him for good. Cicero was thoroughly convinced that Octavian's mission to Rome would be fruitless; that if he measured swords with Antonius he would inevitably fail; and that he was far too young and inexperienced to cope with his antagonists. He was, on the whole, well disposed towards him, and wished him no harm, but he made the fatal blunder of treating him, and thinking of him, as a boy. "Fancy," said he, "that boy going to Rome to match himself against grown men!"

Antonius began by making precisely the same blunder and scorned the notion that he had anything to fear. He was absent from Rome when Octavian turned his steps in the direction of the capital and leisurely proceeded north. Yet even while he was in the neighbourhood of Naples Octavian had given striking proof of his boldness and resolution. He had pledged himself to defray the cost of the shows at the festival of the Parilia on April 21st, a festival in which Julius had always taken the keenest interest. This was his first step to conciliate the favour of the Roman citizens, and they admired equally the boldness of the giver and

the magnificence of his entertainment. So when, after a few days' halt at Tarracina, Octavian entered the capital, he found the populace prepared to give him a warm welcome. He had awakened their curiosity. All classes were eager to see and note the bearing of Cæsar's heir. And it was remarked that on the day of his entry there was a peculiarly radiant effulgence around the sun, from which men drew auguries favourable to the prospects of him who came as a private citizen, claiming a private citizen's rights. But there was a general feeling that the heir to Cæsar's fortune would soon appear as a claimant for political power. His mother, Atia, and his step-father, Philippus, did what they could to persuade him to drop the name of Cæsar, but his unhesitating answer was that the Dictator had thought him worthy to bear it, and that to shrink from accepting so glorious a name would be a confession of unworthiness. Consequently, he lost no time in appearing before the City Prætor, Caius Antonius, and formally declared his intention of taking up his inheritance, as Cæsar's first heir. It was also necessary for him to obtain the sanction of the people to his adoption by means of a *lex curiata*, and to this end he pleaded his cause in a speech wherein he eulogised his benefactor to the skies and took care to promise that he would pay the legacies which Cæsar had left to every citizen. The speech was well received by the people, so well, indeed, that it brought the Consul Antonius back to Rome in haste with the intention of silencing the new and dangerous rival who had appeared in his absence. A stormy

interview took place in the Consul's house. Octavian demanded his inheritance; Antonius replied that Cæsar's money was not private but public treasure, and had been spent by him in the service of the State. He took credit to himself for having secured the ratification of Cæsar's acts, warned Octavian that he was courting danger, and sought to divert him from the policy which he seemed determined to adopt. But Octavian was not to be browbeaten out of his rights, and when he left the presence of the Consul his next step was to realise all the private estate of Cæsar, borrow money from his friends and relatives, and raise a sum sufficient to pay the legacies which Cæsar had bequeathed to the people. Not content with this, he provided the shows in honour of Cæsar, as founder of the Temple of Venus the Ancestress, which Julius had built in fulfilment of a vow made on the morning of the battle of Pharsalus.

Thus Octavian had not been a month in Rome before he had made a bold bid for popularity and had succeeded in attracting to himself the sympathies of the crowd. Profiting alike by the absence of the Republican chiefs and by the unpopularity of Antonius, he boldly demanded that the golden throne and crown, which the Senate had decreed to Cæsar, should be exhibited at the festival. This was vetoed by the tribunes in the service of Antonius, but the absence of these glittering tokens of power was more than compensated by the appearance in the heavens of a comet of unusual splendour, which Octavian and his friends immediately hailed

as proof that Cæsar was now admitted to the company of the gods. He ventured, therefore, to erect a statue to the new divinity in the Temple of Venus, the head being surmounted by a golden star, and in the midst of the excitement caused by this evident sign from heaven, the Senate was prevailed upon to decree that henceforward the name of the month Quintilis, which stood fifth in the Roman calendar, should be changed to that of Julius. If this was a triumph for the dead Dictator, whose statues, not a month before, had been thrown down by Dolabella, it was an even greater triumph for Octavian, the Dictator's heir, who now clearly stood forward as an aspirant for power.



CHAPTER II

THE GATHERING STORM

July to October, 44 B.C.

BY sparing Antonius when they slew Cæsar, the Liberators had foredoomed their schemes to ruin. The Consul outplayed them in the game of intrigue and, in spite of the act of amnesty and the confirmation of their prospective appointments, their plight grew daily more precarious. They began to realise that they were marked men, and that if the Cæsarian party triumphed, their destruction was certain. Speedily, therefore, their timid sympathisers in the Senate began to hold more and more aloof, for no one knew what desperate stroke Antonius might be meditating. Most of the leading Republicans, judging that they could breathe more easily in the country than in Rome, betook themselves to their villas and waited for a sign, thus abandoning the capital to Antonius and his adherents. This was an unmistakable proof of weakness, which could not be rectified even by the frenzied efforts of Cicero to rally all those who remained true to the old Constitution. The Liberators, left alone in

Rome, speedily found their position untenable. As prætors, Brutus and Cassius were legally bound to remain within the walls, but they, too, retired towards the end of April to Lanuvium. Decimus Brutus hurried away to his province of Cisalpine Gaul, Trebonius to Asia, and Cimber to Bithynia. But it is clear that they had no settled plan of concerted action and merely drifted with the times, looking helplessly to one another to initiate a policy.

That they were thoroughly despondent is evident from the letters which Cicero wrote during these troubled weeks, while he passed restlessly from villa to villa in the south of Italy. He could not disguise from himself the truth that things were going very badly for the cause, and that Antonius held all the winning cards. And supposing there was war, what was he to do? He had already compromised himself by his approbation of the Ides of March; he would be bound to take a side and join either Sextus Pompeius or Brutus. It would not be as it was in Cæsar's day, when one might remain neutral, sure of magnanimity from the conqueror; this time there must be a formidable massacre of the losing party. Then, as he heard of the skilful use which Antonius was making of Cæsar's papers, the unpalatable truth was borne in upon him that, after all, Cæsar's assassination had done the Republic no good. "The Republic," he writes to Cassius, "has avenged its injuries by the death of the tyrant—nothing more. Which of its dignities has it recovered? We are actually endorsing the rough notes of the man whose

laws we ought to have torn down from the walls where they are inscribed."

Cicero, in fact, was living from day to day in nervous apprehension, tortured by his increasing conviction of the futility of Cæsar's murder. Dependent for his information on letters from Atticus and his other correspondents in Rome, it was impossible for him to gauge the situation correctly. There is something pathetic in the eager way he snatches at the passing straws of hope. Dolabella's repression of a slight Cæsarian tumult at Rome throws him into transports of joy. He had been thinking of quitting Italy and going to Greece—anywhere to be out of the way. Immediately he cheers up and declares that he cannot dream of leaving at such a moment. He almost forgives Dolabella for not paying him back the dowry of Tullia; he hails him as the leader for whom they have been looking in vain. Then news comes from Rome that Dolabella has been bought by Antonius, and Cicero is once again in despair. "I think about Greece more and more." "The Ides of March do not afford me the consolation they did." "There was courage in the arms which slew Cæsar, but the statesmanship was that of a child." And on May 11th, when he hears how Antonius is gathering the veterans around him, he gives way to a gloomy foreboding that war is inevitable. "Old age makes my temper sourer than it was. I am disgusted with everything. But then my active life is over. Let the younger men solve the problem." That is the cry of a disappointed man in a moment of petulance and utter weariness of mind and body. Yet the

next day he is at work again, doing his utmost to rally his friends round the Republic. Cicero's loyalty to Brutus at this time was perhaps more creditable to his heart than to his judgment. He had persuaded himself that the fate of the Republic depended upon the Chief of the Liberators. The shrewd Atticus had challenged this view; Cicero repeated it in emphatic language:—"Either the Republic will fall or else it will be saved by Brutus and his friends." And throughout these weeks he was for ever striving to strengthen the weak-kneed, to infuse into them new courage and energy, and to confirm the loyalty of the doubtful.

To confirm the doubtful—that was the difficulty. These formed an overwhelming majority of the Senate. Again, there were Cæsar's friends to be taken into consideration, men of the stamp of the Consuls-designate, Hirtius and Pansa. They had been loyal adherents of Cæsar while Cæsar lived. They owed their promotion to him; they had fought in his campaigns; he had promised them the consulship for the ensuing year. It was obviously of vital importance to the Republican cause that they should be won over to some reasonable compromise. What, then, were their views upon the extraordinary situation in which they found themselves? Cicero supplies the answer. They roundly condemned the Ides of March; they would negotiate with Cicero, but they would have nothing to do with the Liberators. They believed that Cæsar's acts would be nullified and abrogated if the Liberators proved triumphant, and that Cæsar's friends would be pro-

scribed. For that reason they welcomed Octavian on his arrival in Italy. Yet, while they distrusted Brutus and Cassius, they equally distrusted Antonius, whose domination threatened their peaceful succession to the consulship. Hence they were perfectly prepared to be friendly with Cicero, and lend an ear to his schemes, but were careful not to pledge themselves too deeply. Cæsarians at heart, they were willing to accept any compromise whereby they might enter quietly upon their office at the beginning of the new year.

Antonius had summoned a meeting of the Senate for the first of June, and had flooded Rome with soldiers to overawe opposition. Cicero had long debated whether he should attend and had finally decided that it would not be safe for him to put in an appearance. Brutus and Cassius dared not leave their retreat. Antonius, therefore, found little active opposition when he laid before the Senate his high-handed proposition to abrogate in part the allotment of provinces which had been ratified at the earlier meeting of March 17th. On that occasion Marcus Brutus had been confirmed in his appointment to Macedonia and Cassius in his appointment to Syria. Now the Consul proposed that Macedonia should be given to himself and Syria be transferred to his colleague, Dolabella. There was no shadow of justification for this outrage upon constitutional procedure, and Antonius hardly deigned to offer reasons or excuses for the demand. His motives, indeed, were too transparent to be disguised. Now secure of the co-operation of the treacherous Dolabella, his

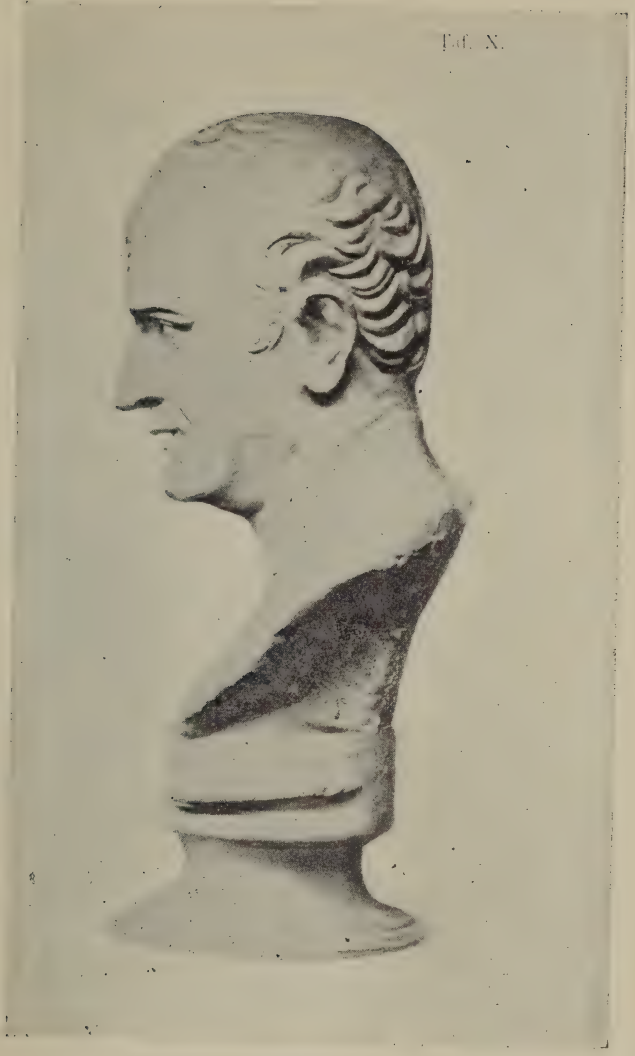
aim was to gain control of the legions assembled in the East for the Thracian and Parthian wars. Then, a few days later, after this *coup de main* had been triumphantly carried through the Senate, he induced that body to pass another decree assigning to Brutus and Cassius the duty of providing the capital with grain, a sort of roving Commissionership with certain military powers in the Mediterranean littoral. They had to decide whether they would pocket their pride and tamely submit to so gross an insult. Cicero put the case very neatly in one of his letters to Atticus. If they accepted the Commissionership as an act of favour from Antonius, they would sacrifice their principles. To attempt a counterstroke was impossible; they had neither the courage nor the means to carry it through. And yet if they quietly acquiesced in the domination of the Consul, who could guarantee their lives? That was the situation in a nutshell. Antonius had cleverly thrust them into a corner, and Cicero, quick to see that a false move would be fatal, hurried up to Antium to discuss what had best be done.

He gives us a graphic picture of the meeting, which throws a flood of light upon the character of the Liberators and the hopelessness of their position. It was a family council, in which the ladies of the house shared and took a prominent part. Servilia was there, the resolute mother of the vacillating Brutus; Portia, wife of Brutus and Cato's daughter, and Tertia, the half-sister of Brutus and wife of Caius Cassius, were also present. What was to be done? Cicero had gone to Antium with his

mind made up. It was not safe for Brutus to go to Rome; he had no alternative, therefore, but to accept the Commissionership. The advice was good and the Liberators knew it, but it was none the less unpalatable. Cassius, in a towering fury, with his eyes darting fire, vowed that he would never go to Sicily. "Then where will you go?" asks Cicero. "To Achaia," was the answer. "And Brutus?" "To Rome, if Cicero advised it." "Quite impossible," said Cicero; "your life would not be worth a day's purchase." Mutual recriminations followed. They stormed at Decimus Brutus for wasting his time in chasing robbers in Cisalpine Gaul instead of making a stand against Antonius. They reproached one another for the opportunities which they had let slip, for their timorous action after the Ides of March, for the empty truce they had patched up with the Consul. They saw that they had missed every opening and fumbled every chance. Cicero tried to quell the tempest. "The past was past; let bygones be bygones." In the end he drew from them their reluctant consent to accept the Commissionerships.

But he quitted Antium with a heavy heart. He was leaving the nerveless leaders of a broken party, and he despaired of the future. "I found the party like a ship with her timbers starting; nay, fast going to pieces. They have no plans, no judgment, no system." Brutus and Cassius formally took over their new duties; Cicero himself sought and obtained a *legatio* from Dolabella — now the tool of Antonius — which enabled him to leave Italy at any moment. The fortunes of the Republicans had

touched their lowest ebb. Their principal anxiety during the next three months was not so much to get back the power they had lost, as to secure their own personal safety. Antonius had uttered the dark menace: "Only the man on the winning side has a chance of seeing length of days." Cicero heard it, turned his eyes towards Greece, and tried to forget the cares of politics in composing his philosophical treatises on Old Age, Friendship, Glory, and Fate. He shrank from the turmoil which was brewing. Still loyal to Brutus, he saw only too well how unfit Brutus was to lead a party. "I send you Brutus's letter," he writes to Atticus on July 6th, "but, good God! did you ever see such fecklessness?" A week later the Ludi Apollinares were celebrated in Rome. It was the duty of Brutus, as City Prætor, to provide the shows. But he had long been absent from the capital and dared not return now. Consequently, while he paid for the entertainment, his colleague, Caius Antonius, brother of his arch-enemy, the Consul, presided. The people had their amusement and they applauded their lavish benefactor. But, for all practical purposes, the money was thrown away. The plaudits which greeted the name of Brutus were barren of political result; and Cicero let fall the bitter sarcasm that the hands of the Roman people suffered more wear and tear from clapping in the theatre than from bearing arms in the defence of the Republic. The games were soon forgotten; the new name of Julius for the month Quintilis remained. Do what they would, the Republicans could not rid themselves of



CICERO.

FROM A BUST NOW IN THE ROYAL GALLERY IN MADRID.

the shadow of the man they had slain. So they decided to leave Italy with a number of ships which they had chartered ostensibly as transports for grain. Antonius accused them of holding levies, exacting contributions, and tampering with the legions over-sea. To this they replied in a joint letter from Naples on August 2nd, complaining that it was intolerable that they should not be allowed to waive their rights as prætors without a Consul threatening them with arms. "We want you to occupy a great and honourable position in a free Republic," they said, "and we challenge you to no open quarrel. Yet we value our liberty at a greater price than your friendship. Be careful, therefore, that you do not aspire to a rôle which you cannot sustain, and bethink yourself not how long Cæsar lived, but how short a time he reigned." Such was the manifesto with which the two prætors replied to the fierce attack made upon them by the Consul on August 1st, at the meeting of the Senate, when their friends had urged the House to pass a decree enabling them to retain their position as prætors while acting as Commissioners for the grain-supply.

Cicero, meanwhile, had embarked, in the middle of July, and sailed slowly down to Syracuse, with the full intention of leaving Italy and remaining away for the rest of the year. One hope alone remained to him. Antonius' consulship expired on December 31st. He would then have to make way for Hirtius and Pansa or there must be war; and Cicero, while by no means quite easy in his mind as to the intentions of the Consuls-elect, felt that at

least there was a reasonable chance of a brighter era dawning when they entered upon their office. He resolved to visit Greece. But the fates willed it otherwise. Twice he set sail from Leucopetra; twice an adverse wind blew his vessel back to port; and on the second occasion news reached him which determined him to abandon his plans and go straight to Rome. He heard of the manifesto of Brutus and Cassius and of the summoning of the Senate, and received a circular letter which the two Liberators had sent round to their friends, begging them to take their places in the Senate House. "They were in good hope"—so ran the document—"that Antonius would give way, and that an accommodation might be arrived at between the two parties." Consequently, Cicero plucked up heart once more and hastened north. At Velia he fell in with Brutus, who welcomed him with open arms, abandoned his usual gloomy reserve, and poured into his ear all the secrets which hitherto he had kept locked in his own breast. Cicero reproached himself for having so much as thought of flight; he thanked the south wind which had saved him from the scandal of abandoning his friends; and, with the encouraging words and plaudits of his titular leader ringing in his ears, he entered Rome on August 31st. His great duel with Antonius was about to begin; he was to make his last great effort to save the Republic, to succeed for a time almost beyond reasonable expectation, and then to die the death of a martyr for his political principles.

What, then, was the political situation which Cicero

found on his return? As far back as June 1st Antonius had secured for himself the province of Macedonia and for Dolabella the province of Syria. But that was merely the first step toward the realisation of the more ambitious schemes which he gradually disclosed. Antonius, who had been trained in the school of Julius, saw that victory could only be obtained by the help of the legions, and that he who commanded the most swords must eventually win. There were six legions stationed without a general on the Ionian coast, waiting to be led against the Parthians. Naturally, they expected to be transported to Syria, the base of all expeditions against Parthia, and Cassius had hoped for the command. When Cassius's province had been given to Dolabella, the legions looked to the latter as their probable leader, but Antonius persuaded his colleague to be content with one, while the remainder were transferred to himself. The Consul induced the Senate to abandon the projected Parthian campaign, and gave orders that the legions should remain in their present quarters, and then, turning from the Senate to the people, he obtained permission for the transfer of Macedonia from himself to his brother Caius, while he boldly claimed for himself the Gallic provinces, and urged that Cisalpine Gaul should be incorporated with the Italian peninsula and placed under the control of the central executive. The latter portion of his scheme failed: the rest succeeded. Decimus Brutus was bidden to make way for Antonius in Cisalpine Gaul, and instructions were given for the Macedonian legions to embark for Italy. They did not, it is

true, begin to arrive until the beginning of October, but the knowledge that they were preparing to start was undoubtedly the principal factor in the political situation.

It is difficult to follow with exactitude the relations between Antonius and Octavian during this eventful summer, but their general outlines are tolerably clear. We have already seen how, when Octavian returned to Rome to claim his patrimony, the Consul thwarted him at every turn. He had hindered the passing of the curiate law necessary for his formal adoption; he had threatened him with violence when he erected a brazen statue to Cæsar; he had prevented the people from electing him a *tribunus suffectus*. It had been Octavian's policy to ingratiate himself with the Senate, and especially with the leading members of the old noble families, and, without relinquishing the name of Cæsar, to affect adherence to the Constitutionalist party and its principles. He was apparently regarded as an unknown quantity, as one who might at any moment become important and even dangerous. Thus we find Cicero, on June 10th, writing:

"As for Octavian, I have come to the conclusion that he has plenty of ability and courage and that his sentiments towards our heroes, the Liberators, are all that we could desire. But we must carefully consider how far we can trust one so young, bearing the name he does, coming from such a stock, and with such a bringing up. Nevertheless, he is a man to be nursed, and, above all, it is of supreme importance to detach him from Antonius. His disposition is good, if only it will bear the strain."

There is reason to think that Antonius was quicker than Cicero to see of what the youthful Octavian was actually, and not merely potentially, capable, and therefore, when in July and August he was feeling his way towards his great coup,— that of ousting Decimus from his province and bringing back the legions to Italy,— Antonius found it politic to effect a rapprochement with him and disarm his active opposition. Whenever Antonius felt apprehensive of a strong Republican reaction — and there were moments when that seemed just within the bounds of probability — he made overtures to Octavian. Strong as Antonius was, he felt compelled to conciliate, on occasion, the rival whom he had already begun to fear. But there was no lasting understanding between them, and the breach was again beginning to widen.

Cicero had hurried up to Rome with unusual haste to be in time for the meeting of September 1st, but he did not take his place in the Curia, pleading the fatigue of his journey as an excuse for non-attendance. The real reason lay elsewhere. He had been warned that Antonius was furious at his coming, and had prepared a savage attack upon him. The Consul taunted him with being afraid to meet him face to face and then quitted the city for his Tiburtine villa, leaving his colleague, Dolabella, to preside over the adjourned meeting on the following day, at which Cicero delivered the first of that matchless series of fourteen orations which, while they cost him his life, have gained him deathless glory. The First Philippic was a consummate piece of political rhetoric.

Cicero did not pick up the gauntlet which Antonius had thrown down. He rather implored his enemy not to take the irretrievable step. He praised Antonius for his behaviour up to the first of June, and sharply contrasted it with his subsequent conduct. Since that date, he exclaimed, the whole scene had changed. "*Nihil per senatum; multa et magna per populum, et absente populo et invito.*" In short, he accused Antonius of having ignored the Senate, of having carried his high-handed measures through the people, and even, when it suited his purpose, of having usurped absolute power without the slightest semblance of constitutional procedure. It was not a candid speech. It was rather a clever party move, intended, if possible, to isolate Antonius, and rally the Moderates against him. What Cicero really thought of Antonius' conduct between the Ides of March and June 1st was very different from the flattering praise which it now suited his purpose to bestow upon it. But he wished to gain public opinion over to his side by making a last appeal to the Consul to return to a constitutional position. However, it merely served to rouse Antonius to a deeper hatred. He knew the power of Cicero's eloquence, and the electrifying effect it had upon the Roman Senate. The chilly, egotistical, self-satisfied Brutus was an enemy who might safely be ignored; Cicero's presence in Rome was a constant scource of danger to his plans. Antonius, therefore, formally renounced his friendship with Cicero, and prepared another onslaught, which he delivered on the nineteenth of September.

Again Cicero was absent. He shrank from facing the Consul when surrounded by his body-guard, and prudently remained at home. The fierce tirade of the Consul thoroughly cowed the Senate. They had applauded Cicero; Antonius's reply was to parade his swordsmen through the streets of Rome. The capital became an armed camp. The Consul boldly erected a statue of Cæsar on the Rostra and dedicated it "*Parenti Optime Merito.*" Until the end of the month Cicero kept within doors and then sought the seclusion of his villa at Puteoli, where he elaborated that amazing torrent of invective, the Second Philippic. But it was never spoken, and was not even published until two months later, when the sword had already been drawn. Antonius for three weeks terrorised Rome and ruled alone. On October 2nd he threw aside the mask and declaimed against Cicero and the Liberators as traitors and assassins. On October 5th he declared that he had discovered a plot of Octavian against his life. On October 9th he left Rome for Brundisium to take command of the legions which had been brought across the Adriatic. Although, as yet, no war was proclaimed, war had in truth begun.

CHAPTER III

OCTAVIAN AND THE SENATE

October, 44 to March, 43 B.C.

OCTAVIAN now stepped boldly forward with a determined, though still a dissembling, front. Whether he had actually engaged in a plot against the Consul's life early in October and hired assassins to slay his rival cannot be satisfactorily ascertained. Even at the moment the charge was not generally believed, for the shrewdest observers saw that it was not to Octavian's advantage that Antonius should be got out of the way at present, inasmuch as his removal would have cleared the path for the Republicans and ruined Octavian's ulterior designs. But the withdrawal of Antonius to Brundisium to place himself at the head of the legions was a step which bore only one interpretation. Every one in Rome knew that the Consul intended to return with a powerful army at his back, which would enable him to dictate what terms he chose. Octavian, therefore, betook himself to Campania, where he set about collecting an army from the veterans of Cæsar. He met with astonishing success.

As he passed through the military colonies he issued a summons to arms which was responded to with alacrity. The old soldiers came trooping round him, animated by a fierce desire to avenge the Ides of March, and attracted to the young heir at once by the name he bore, by his ingratiating manners, and by the liberal donative of two thousand sesterces which he promised to all who joined his standard. Tired of the humdrum life of the country and the monotonous labour of their farms, they looked forward again to the prospect of loot. Within a month Octavian had assembled a motley force of ten thousand men and marched towards Rome, arriving before the gates by the middle of November. The troops remained outside the walls, while their leader passed within and, entering the Forum, harangued the people against the Consul, and offered himself as the defender of the Commonwealth.

The scene is described by Appian in a curious chapter which darkens rather than enlightens our understanding of what actually took place. For, according to his account, the veterans were dismayed to hear that they were to be asked to draw their swords against Antonius, and insisted upon the two Cæsarian leaders' becoming reconciled. We are told that the majority of them refused for a time to obey Octavian's orders and were only won over to his designs by a liberal largesse. It would seem, indeed, if Appian's narrative is to be trusted, that Octavian had promised to lead them, not against Antonius but against the Liberators, and that they believed that he and the Consul were acting in concert.

Consequently, people began to suspect that Octavian's denunciations of the Consul were a mere blind, and that it was settled between them that Antonius should have supreme power, while Octavian should be free to avenge the murder of his uncle and punish the enemies of his house. The chapter is important for two reasons. It emphasises the extraordinary uncertainty which prevailed as to the motives actuating the protagonists of the drama, and it also serves to show the popularity of Antonius with Cæsar's old troops. Be that as it may, Octavian marched his soldiers north, visiting Ravenna and the neighbouring towns, and fixed his headquarters at Arretium, where his officers enrolled fresh recruits and applied themselves to the task of training, equipping, and organising their men into legions, ready to take the field.

Antonius was acting with no less resolution than his rival. He left Rome, as we have seen, on October 9th, and proceeded at once to Brundisium where the four legions just transferred from Macedonia were now encamped. They did not give him the welcome he had expected, but sullenly called upon him to explain why he had failed to punish the murderers of Cæsar. Antonius, who never lacked courage in the moment of danger, replied that they ought to thank him for securing their return to Italy and sparing them the dangers and hardships of a Parthian campaign, declaimed against the rash, headstrong lad whose emissaries had tampered with their allegiance, and promised them a donative if they were loyal and well conducted. Then, finding

that they still shewed traces of a mutinous temper, he called for the muster-rolls and put to death some of the more insubordinate. Shortly afterwards he broke up the camp, directed the officers to lead their men north in detachments along the coast road and concentrate at Ariminum, while he himself hurriedly returned to Rome. His presence there was urgently required. The capital had been thrown into confusion by the sudden appearance of the army of Octavian, now drawn off to the borders of Cisalpine Gaul, and by Octavian's offer to become the champion of the State. Antonius did not scruple to enter the city with an armed force and take military possession. He summoned a meeting of the Senate for November 28th and was on his way to the Curia when a messenger brought him word that the Martian Legion had gone over to Octavian. Before he had recovered from the shock another courier came running up to inform him that the Fourth Legion had also deserted him. It was a bitter and damaging blow, but the Consul, immediately the meeting was concluded, took horse and rode to Alba in the hope that he might even yet recall the mutineers to their allegiance. They, however, had shut the gates, and received him on his approach with a shower of arrows. Baffled in this, the Consul increased his promised donative to two thousand sesterces—thereby equalling the offer of Octavian—and succeeded in keeping the remaining two Macedonian legions true to their colours. Then, feeling that the crisis had at last come and could no longer be postponed, Antonius proclaimed his intention of taking up the

command of Cisalpine Gaul, which had been conferred upon him by the people, and called upon Decimus Brutus to withdraw. When the Republican chief scornfully refused and denied his title, Antonius raised his standard at Tibur.

Rome was thus freed from the presence, though not from the menace, of the armies of Antonius and Octavian, and it was now open to Cicero to return and take his place in the Senate. For two months he had been wandering from villa to villa, busily engaged upon the Second Philippic, polishing and repolishing its eloquent periods, and giving the razor edge to its terrible invective. To this and to philosophy he devoted most of his time, though his letter-carriers and those of Atticus repassed one another constantly on the road between Puteoli and Rome. His ears were always listening anxiously for the latest news from the capital; his hopes were always ready to rise at the slightest ebb in the tide of Antonius's power. "Anything to crush the Consul!" was his constant prayer, that raving madman who was striving to strangle the Republic, and would not tolerate even the bearing of a free man, to say nothing of free speech. "The Republic looks like getting its own again," he wrote on October 26th, but in the next sentence, taught by the disappointments of the last six months, he cautiously added, "yet we must not shout till we are out of the wood." Cicero had at length come to see how thick the wood was and how difficult of egress. There was, indeed, but a single way out, and that was full of perils. It was to accept the overtures of Octavian.

Octavian had already offered himself in the Roman Forum as the champion of the Republic against Antonius. He now strove with all his power to win over Cicero. When he was making his tour through Campania to raise the veterans he constantly wrote to Cicero asking for advice and counsel. He desired a private interview at Capua. He wished to know whether he had better intercept Antonius's advance from Brundisium by holding Capua, or return directly to Rome. He repeatedly urged Cicero to go back and take his place in the Senate, and in every letter he pledged his word to act through the Senate in accordance with constitutional practice. Cicero was torn with conflicting doubts and hopes. He welcomed without reservation the growth of a new power which might counterbalance that of Antonius. He was favourably disposed to Octavian and delighted with his promise to act through the Senate on the lines which Cicero himself had laid down. But could he place any reliance on the word of a Cæsar? Ought he, who was the embodiment of caution, to accept the offer of an impetuous youth? "He is insistent; I still have my doubts." Why, he asks sorrowfully, is not Brutus here, now that there is a chance of rallying the good citizens? "Oh! Brutus, where are you? What a chance in a million you are losing! I thought something of the sort would happen, but never guessed it would be as it is."

Early in November he is still hesitating. He is equally impressed and delighted by the astonishing enthusiasm which the Italian municipalities have

displayed towards "the boy." He admires the vigour with which he is acting and the boldness with which he meets difficulties. Yet he is still certain that Antonius is the stronger of the two, and cannot help feeling that Octavian is, after all, a mere lad. "*Est plane puer*," he writes, with a touch of contemptuous scorn, when Octavian suggests that he may be able to get the Senators to come together and resist Antonius to his face. Cicero pooh-poohs the idea as absurd, for experience had taught him that the Senate was a sorry staff to lean upon in a moment of danger. So a few days later he again takes up the theme. "The youth has plenty of spirit, but he lacks authority. There is no weight behind him." The shrewd Atticus, too, was pointing out the danger of trusting too implicitly in the professions of Octavian. "If," he said, "the lad gets much power, then the *acta* of the tyrant will be confirmed much more decisively than they were in the Temple of Tellus (*i. e.*, at the meeting of the Senate on March 17th), and that will be a direct blow to Brutus. On the other hand, if he is beaten, Antonius will become intolerable." Cicero, therefore, was on the horns of a dilemma. Octavian had given Antonius some fine thumping blows (*belle iste puer retundit Antonium*), yet, on the other hand, in his harangues to the people he had made constant appeals to Cæsar, and Cicero was not inclined to accept his offers unreservedly unless he were completely satisfied that Octavian would be not only not hostile to the tyrannicides, but actively their friend. Cicero was magnificently loyal to the Liberators.

The month of November slowly passed. Cicero moved nearer and nearer to Rome anxious, above all things, not to fall in with Antonius, who was rushing hither and thither "with Cæsarian rapidity," and finally, when Antonius had gone off to the borders of Cisalpine Gaul with his army, Cicero entered the city on December 9th. But before he passed within its walls he took from his desk the Second Philippic and published it to the world. Thenceforward there could be no possibility of reconciliation or accommodation between them. The effect of its publication was instantaneous; and well it might be, for in all the literature of invective there is nothing to be compared with this Second Philippic. Antonius was both hated and feared. He had no popular following. His power lay in the swords of the legions which he had bought over to his service, and in his position as the chief magistrate of Rome. Cicero in this pamphlet painted his character in the blackest colours, assailed him as the enemy of his country, and called upon all good citizens to unite for his overthrow. It was more than a political manifesto,—it was a direct call to arms, and the writer stood forward as the champion of the Republic. For the next seven months Cicero was the leader of the constitutionalist party. Upon him, and not upon the absent Brutus, the hopes of the Optimates rested.

We may pass rapidly over the events in Rome during the remainder of the year. The capital was deserted by its principal magistrates. Antonius, the Consul, was besieging Decimus Brutus in Mutina;

Dolabella, his colleague, had already gone to Syria to possess himself of his province. Of the prætors, Brutus and Cassius had long been absent, and Caius Antonius had sailed to seize Macedonia in his brother's interests. But the new tribunes entered peacefully upon their duties on December 10th, and one of these, Marcus Servilius, called a meeting of the Senate for the 20th to debate what steps should be taken for the public security until Hirtius and Pansa, the Consuls-designate, took over the consulship on January 1st. Cicero flung himself with whole-hearted vigour into the breach. He took upon himself the duties of the executive government. At the meeting on the 20th he delivered the Third Philippic before a full house, and then, passing into the Forum, harangued the crowd with the Fourth. He found the Senate willing to accept his strong lead against Antonius. They decreed their solemn thanks to Octavian and his veterans, to the two legions which had deserted Antonius, and to Decimus Brutus for the confident front he was shewing in Cisalpine Gaul. Cicero's rhetoric was irresistible; the people in the Forum shouted that he had twice saved the State, and he himself believed that upon that glorious day he had laid anew the foundations of a Free Republic.

At last on January 1st, the two new Consuls entered upon their office. Antonius was no longer the chief magistrate of the year with power to raise levies, and, in Cicero's opinion, he ought to be crushed at once. Consequently, at the meeting of the Senate, the orator insisted that Antonius should be declared a



THE FORUM.

AS SEEN FROM THE CAPITOL.

The Temple of Saturn in the foreground, in the background a portion of the Arch of Titus and the ruins of the Colosseum.

(*Baumeister.*)

public enemy and that war should be declared without delay. Cicero was undoubtedly right and the policy which he advocated in the Fifth Philippic was sound. He would have no parley with Antonius. If the ex-Consul wanted peace, let him lay down his arms; if he was not an enemy to the State, let him obey the Senate. Cicero, by this time, had fully persuaded himself of the sincerity of Octavian's professions of loyalty, or, if any doubts still lingered in his mind, he had determined to keep them in the background. Hence the glowing eulogy of the young champion of the Republic which appears in the Fifth Philippic and the famous passage which, even after the lapse of so many centuries, it is difficult to read unmoved as we recall the tragic sequel.

I know intimately the young man's every feeling. Nothing is dearer to him than the Free State; nothing has more weight with him than your influence; nothing is more desired by him than the good opinion of virtuous men; nothing is more delightful to him than true glory. Therefore, so far from your having any right to be afraid of him, you should rather expect from him greater and nobler services; nor should you apprehend, in the case of one who has gone to free Decimus Brutus from being besieged, that any memory of private affliction will remain and have greater weight with him than the safety of the State. I venture to pledge my word, Senators, to you and to the Roman people and to the State—and assuredly, were the case different, I should not venture to do so, as no force compels me, and in such an important matter I dread being thought dangerously rash—I promise, I undertake, I pledge my word that

Caius Cæsar will always be as loyal a citizen as he is to-day, and as our most fervent wishes and prayers desire.

Cicero, in other words, had staked his all on the loyalty of Octavian. Yet he failed to screw the courage of the Senate up to the point of declaring war against Antonius. There were many in the Senate who thought that the balance of military power inclined to the ex-Consul's side and did not wish to push matters to extremes. There were others, again, who distrusted Octavian, while a large number of moderate men had friends and relatives in both camps. Moreover, Cicero, despite his eloquence, was never implicitly trusted by the Optimates. Repeatedly, during his long career, they had thrown him over at the critical moment, and so now again, after a long and frequently adjourned debate, they decided to send envoys to Antonius. It may have been some solace to Cicero that they adopted his proposals respecting the awards and honours for Octavian and Decimus Brutus, but he saw clearly enough that the embassy was futile and that precious time was being lost.

While events in Rome were shaping themselves thus, warlike operations had been for some weeks in progress in the north of Italy, though as yet no blood had been shed. Antonius had raised his standard at Tibur towards the end of November, and summoned Decimus Brutus to withdraw from Cisalpine Gaul. Decimus's only answer was to retire to Mutina and fortify it against attack. Before the end of the year, 44 B. C., Antonius had drawn his

lines around the town and hoped to reduce it by siege, as it was too strong to capture by assault. Cisalpine Gaul, therefore, and the country about Mutina in particular, formed the arena in which the combatants were to fight out their quarrel. It is impossible, however, to understand the tortuous events of the next four months unless the state of affairs in the neighbouring provinces is carefully borne in mind. Decimus Brutus, who was irrevocably committed to the Republican cause by reason of his enmity to Antonius and the special hatred with which he was regarded by Cæsar's veterans, commanded the support of the three legions which he had found in the province on taking it over from his predecessor, and he had raised numerous levies of raw troops. His nearest neighbour was Lucius Munatius Plancus, governor of Gallia Comata, who also had three legions under his command. Gallia Narbonensis and Hither Spain were under the control of Lepidus and four legions, while Further Spain was in the hands of Pollio with two legions. Much, therefore, depended upon the disposition and loyalty of these three provincial governors, who, between them, were masters of nine legions. Pollio, who was furthest removed from the scene, gave Cicero the most positive assurance of his loyalty, and seems to have been genuinely devoted to the Republican cause. Lepidus was far less to be depended upon, and was strongly suspected of being in league with Antonius. It was to Plancus, therefore, who lay nearest to Mutina, that Cicero turned most frequently, and implored him to be true to his obvious duty

to the Republic. But Plancus preferred to sit upon the fence and watch. He assured Cicero that he was doing all he possibly could for the good cause, — but he did not move a step towards the assistance of Decimus Brutus. Yet he and Pollio and Lepidus were always apparently on the point of moving, always just about to throw their swords into the scale and, to the very end, Cicero never lost hope that they would intervene to crush Antonius.

In all other quarters the outlook was distinctly encouraging. The important province of Africa was held by the loyal Quintus Cornificius. In the East, the Republicans were prospering beyond all reasonable expectation, and had only suffered one set-back in the murder of Trebonius, on February 2nd, by Dolabella, who had left Rome at the end of November, in order to secure his province of Syria before the arrival of Cassius. The murder was one of revolting barbarity and made a deep impression at Rome, where the Senate immediately declared Dolabella a public enemy and authorised Cassius to wage war against him. That able soldier soon made his presence felt. At the beginning of March, 43, he was at Tarichea in Palestine and had no fewer than eleven legions under his command, for Lucius Murcus, — who had been sent by Julius Cæsar with three legions to quell the revolt of Cæcilius Bassus, one of the lieutenants of Pompeius, — Quintus Crispus, the Governor of Bithynia, and Aulus Allienus, marching from Egypt, had joined their forces to his. Cassius, therefore, held the whole of Asia Minor for the Republic, and a few weeks later Dolabella committed

suicide in despair, when blockaded and driven to bay in the city of Laodicea. Marcus Brutus was similarly engaged in Greece and Macedonia. He had thrown off his paralysing indecision when he quitted Italy. Greece welcomed him with open arms, and, rapidly collecting an army, he occupied Achaia, Macedonia, and Illyricum. Cicero was both delighted and surprised. "Our friend Brutus," he wrote to Cassius in February, "has gained a brilliant reputation, for his achievements have been remarkable and unlooked-for, and, while welcome in themselves, they are all the more splendid on account of the swiftness with which they have followed one another." By a stroke of good fortune Brutus had managed to take prisoner Caius Antonius, his rival in the Macedonian command, whom he kept as a valuable hostage. Practically, therefore, by the beginning of March, the whole of the East was in Republican hands, and this fact alone was sufficient to justify the high hopes which Cicero entertained. After the event it is easy to be wise, and the complete and crushing failure of Cicero's policy has provided subsequent historians with plentiful opportunities for indulging their sarcasm at the orator-statesman's expense. Most of these gibes are ill-founded and ill-deserved. With Marcus Brutus and Cassius holding the East, with Cornificius in Africa, with the armies of Octavian and Decimus Brutus near Mutina, Cicero had good warrant to feel confidence in the future, even though the loyalty of Lepidus, Plancus, and Pollio should prove a loyalty of words rather than of deeds.



CHAPTER IV

THE CAMPAIGN OF MUTINA: OCTAVIAN BREAKS WITH THE SENATE AND SEIZES ROME

March to August, 43 B.C.

OCTAVIAN, too, had reason to be satisfied with the general trend of events. Thanks to the enthusiastic and whole-hearted way in which the head of the constitutionalist party had pledged his word for Octavian's loyalty, the Senate had granted to their youthful champion pro-prætorian authority and senatorial rank among the *prætorii*. These distinctions they bestowed on January 1st; on the following day they admitted him to a seat in the Senate, gave him the *ornamenta consularia*, and facilitated his speedy rise to the highest offices of the State by relaxing in his favour the usual restrictions of age. Nor was this all. On the motion of Philippus, he was voted an equestrian statue and was entrusted, in conjunction with the Consuls, with the duty of effecting the release of Decimus Brutus from Mutina. Octavian and his legions were already within striking distance of the army of Antonius, and by these decrees Cicero and

the Senate hoped to bind them fast to the support of their cause. Yet a considerable section still hesitated to declare formal war against Antonius, and, in spite of Cicero's remonstrances, eventually persuaded the Senate to send a last embassy to the ex-Consul. Piso, Sulpicius, and Philippus were chosen for this important duty. Their instructions were precise and clear. They were not to negotiate, but to deliver an ultimatum; not to conclude a treaty, but to demand entire submission. They were to lay before Antonius the commands of the Senate and threaten him with war unless he at once complied. He was to raise the siege of Mutina, quit Cisalpine Gaul, and not approach within two hundred miles of Rome, on the penalty, if he declined, of being declared a public enemy. The embassy proved a total failure. Servius Sulpicius died on the journey, and Antonius refused to allow Piso and Philippus to enter his lines, and sent back to the Senate a long list of counter-demands. He retorted to their ultimatum with an ultimatum of his own, and claimed rewards for his troops, full confirmation of his enactments as Consul, an indemnity for the State moneys he had disbursed, and the grant of Gallia Comata with six legions to the close of the year 39. These were impossible terms, and on February 2nd war was declared. Levies were set on foot by the Consuls throughout Italy, and the results more than answered Cicero's expectations. "All are offering themselves spontaneously," he writes; "such is the enthusiasm which has taken possession of men's minds from their yearning for liberty."

As money was urgently required for the equipment and payment of the troops, the usual festivals were abandoned to save expenditure; a property tax of four per cent. was imposed, and the Senators also contributed a special charge of three sesterces on every tile in their houses. Encouraged by the good news constantly arriving from the East, Cicero was in good heart, and delivered speech after speech to the Senators and the people in order to fan the flame of resentment against Antonius. But the rival forces were slow in coming to hand-grips. It was winter, and at the end of February the position was much the same as at the beginning of the month. Antonius had drawn off a considerable part of his army from Mutina and was holding Bononia in strength; Hirtius was at Claterna; Octavian at Forum Cornelii, while Pansa was still collecting and organising the levies and did not leave Rome for the north until March 19th. Nor was it until the middle of April that the opposing armies came to close quarters and brought on the general action which Cicero and the Republicans at Rome were awaiting with feverish impatience.

The story of the brief campaign which effectually raised the siege of Mutina, set Decimus Brutus free from his long confinement, and compelled Antonius to beat a hasty retreat, to all appearances totally discomfited, must be narrated in few words. Hirtius and Octavian, acting throughout in concert, had moved up to Bononia which was strongly held by Antonius's troops. After a series of unimportant skirmishes, Bononia seems to have been evacuated

by the Antonians, and Antonius himself sought to crush the recruits of Pansa before they could effect a junction with the main Republican army. Advancing, therefore, with two veteran legions eastward along the Æmilian Road, Antonius came into touch with Pansa at Forum Gallorum on April 15th, and after a stubborn engagement, in which Pansa himself received a mortal wound, succeeded in gaining a victory. But his triumph was short-lived. Hirtius had skilfully divined the strategy of Antonius and had sent a strong contingent to attack him on the flank, which arrived in time to turn the fortunes of the day and thrust back the army of Antonius upon Mutina. Meanwhile Octavian had repulsed an attack delivered upon his camp by Antonius's brother, Lucius, and the general issue of the day's fighting was completely favourable to the Republican cause. A week later the Republican generals made a combined assault upon the Antonian lines and stormed the camp. Whether Decimus Brutus contributed to the victory by sallying out of Mutina is doubtful; probably his troops were too enfeebled by the long siege which they had undergone to be of much active assistance. The victory, however, was complete and, in the first flush of exultation at the defeat of Antonius, the Republicans scarcely realised the serious blow they had sustained in the death of the two Consuls.

Hirtius had fallen in the hour of victory, and a few days later Pansa succumbed to the wound he had received at Forum Gallorum. Their vacant places simply acted as another incentive to the ambitions of the aspirants for power. But these considerations

were overlooked in the joy of victory. No sooner did the news of Antonius's first defeat reach Rome than the citizens acclaimed Cicero as their saviour and bore him triumphantly to the Capitol, and the orator, on the following day, delivered the Fourteenth and last of his Philippics before an applauding Senate. On the 25th news came that Mutina had been relieved and that Antonius was in full flight, and twenty-four hours afterwards he and his supporters were declared public enemies. Every one took it for granted that the success of the Republican cause was assured. The Senate, on the motion of Cicero, heaped distinctions on the head of Decimus Brutus, decreed a thanksgiving of fifty days, and awarded him a triumph. Statues and a public funeral were voted to the dead Consuls; the soldiers were to be paid the donatives which had been promised them; while Octavian's share of the honours was limited to an ovation. Nothing more clearly shews the universal conviction that the war was over and that there was nothing more to be feared from Antonius than the difference between the extravagant rewards voted to Decimus Brutus and the grudging acknowledgment paid to Octavian. The mistake cost the Senate dear. Antonius, so far from being irretrievably ruined, was to give signal proof of his military genius by rescuing himself from a desperate position; the war, far from being over, had in reality only just begun, and the tables were turned with melo-dramatic suddenness.

It is important to emphasise this delusion of Cicero and the Senate, for on no other supposition

can we explain the recklessness with which they prepared to fling aside the young general whose energy and whose legions had contributed so much to the defeat of Antonius's designs. They seem to have taken for granted that as both Consuls of the year had fallen in battle, Octavian would be content to accept Decimus Brutus as the generalissimo of the Republican forces. To what extent they really believed in Octavian's loyalty we cannot say. Cicero, indeed, had pledged his reputation that the young man was devoted, heart and soul, to the Republic. But when he made that pledge the ascendancy of Antonius was still unbroken, and the Senate had imperative need of Octavian's legions. They were obliged, therefore, to accept his protestations, just as they were obliged to accept the army which he placed at their service. Yet that they were jealous and suspicious of the boy, whom they had loaded with privileges in the day of imminent danger, became evident when the peril seemed to have passed away. By their vote they gave all the credit for the successful issue of the campaign to the general, who had done little or nothing towards earning the victory. This would have been rash and ill timed if Antonius had been slain; it was nothing short of madness with Antonius still at liberty and in command even of a broken army.

The disastrous consequences of such mistaken policy speedily became apparent. Antonius soon gave renewed proof of the generalship which had earned for him the confidence of his old commander, Julius. Extricating his shattered army from his

camp near Mutina, he marched south into Etruria, and then, turning sharply to the west, struck across to the sea. At Vada, near Genoa, he was joined by his trusted lieutenant, Ventidius, who, with three legions, had skilfully evaded the Republican armies, and marched up unopposed from the south of Italy. Unhampered by any close pursuit, though in considerable straits for money and supplies, Antonius crossed the Maritime Alps and encamped at Forum Julii, the modern Fréjus, within touch of the camp of Lepidus. Whether Antonius might have been overtaken and crushed by the Republican armies, if they had followed him up at once, is one of those unsolved military problems to which no answer can be given. But that the attempt ought to have been made is obvious. Who, then, was to blame for the neglect to push home the victory won at Mutina? The responsibility rests with Octavian. Antonius was deliberately spared from effective pursuit by Octavian, who was in no mood to accept orders from Decimus Brutus. The latter clearly saw what the necessities of the moment demanded, but his army, which for months had been besieged and cooped up within narrow lines, had not the mobility required for a hot pursuit. Decimus explained his enforced inaction in a letter to Cicero, written in the middle of May, which entirely acquits him of blame for allowing Antonius to escape from the net:

I could not pursue Antonius at once for the following reasons: I had neither cavalry nor pack animals. I did not know that either Hirtius or Aquila had fallen.

I could not feel confidence in Cæsar, until I had met with him and talked with him. Thus the first day after the relief passed. The next morning I was summoned to Bononia to see Pansa. On the way I received information that he was dead. I hastened back to my feeble forces (*ad meas copiolas*), for I can give them no other name; they are terribly thinned and in a wretched plight for lack of necessaries. Antonius got two days' start of me and marched much farther in his flight than I did in pursuit, for he went in disorder, I in regular formation.

Consequently Decimus and his legions merely followed in the track of Antonius and never got within striking distance. Then, when he found it was Antonius's intention to cross the Alps, Decimus rightly concluded that there must be a secret understanding between Antonius and Lepidus, and abandoning any further pretence of pursuit, he turned off to the north, crossed the Graian Alps joined Plancus at Cularo, and waited.

It was Octavian who, with his comparatively fresh troops and with the legions of Hirtius and Pansa, now left leaderless, should have pursued Antonius, if he had been the loyal servant of the Senate he pretended to be. But Octavian remained inactive. He held aloof from Decimus, and though it is certain that some communications passed between them their precise nature is unknown. The extraordinary story narrated by Appian may certainly be dismissed as mythical. According to him, Decimus requested an interview, declaring that he repented the part he had taken in the assassination of

Julius. To this Octavian is reported to have replied that he had come, not to rescue Decimus but to fight with Antonius; and that while he had no scruples about effecting a reconciliation with Antonius he would never look upon the face or listen to the words of Decimus. Thereupon Decimus read aloud the decree of the Senate investing him with the command of the Cisalpine, and forbade Octavian to cross the river or pursue Antonius, saying that he was strong enough to pursue him alone and unaided. The story is clearly a fabrication on the part of the Cæsarian historian, devised to throw the blame of the escape of Antonius upon the shoulders of Decimus and to acquit Octavian of all responsibility. Nor have any modern historians accepted it as credible. Nevertheless, it corroborates what we know from other sources of the ill-will subsisting between the two commanders. "Cæsar will take no orders from any one, and his soldiers will take no orders from him," wrote Decimus to Cicero. "If he had acted on my advice and crossed the Apennines, I should have reduced Antonius to such straits that he would have perished of hunger and not by the sword." Obviously, therefore, it was Decimus who urged a vigorous pursuit and Octavian who held back and facilitated Antonius's escape.

Young as Octavian was, his was the coolest head of all those who were taking a leading part at this critical moment. He must have seen that Cicero and his Senate were using him as their cat's-paw and accepted him as their champion only so long as it was Antonius from whom they had most to fear.



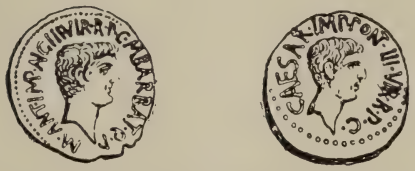
COIN OF JULIUS CÆSAR AND
MARCUS ANTONIUS.



SMALL COINS OF AUGUSTUS.



COIN OF BRUTUS.



COIN OF MARCUS ANTONIUS AND OCTAVIUS.

Their principal anxiety had been to safeguard the position of the Liberators. Hence the alacrity with which they had declared war against Dolabella for the murder of Trebonius, and hence the decree which gave Brutus and Cassius full power and control over all the provinces and armies between the Adriatic and the Orient. They had disclosed their hand thus clearly even before the short campaign around Mutina had opened; they shewed their purpose still more unmistakably when news came of the successes won by the Consuls. It was quite manifest which way the wind was blowing. Fully convinced as they were at the moment that Antonius was irreparably ruined, they made haste to give the cold shoulder to Octavian and cumulate all the honours they had in their power to bestow upon Decimus Brutus, who was one of themselves and was committed, hand and foot, to the oligarchical cause. But if it was the policy of the Senate to crush Antonius by means of Octavian and then sharply assert their own authority over Octavian, it was the policy of the latter to see that he was not shelved. While the power of Antonius was unbroken it was obviously to his interest to side with the Senate; and side with them he did. But it was not to his interest to crush Antonius beyond hope of recovery. Both were throwing for the same stake — personal domination. The Senate, the Republican chiefs, and the Liberators above all, were their common enemy, and until these were destroyed neither had any chance of ultimate victory. We can hardly suppose that at this early stage Octavian foresaw

how things would turn out, but we may fairly assume that he read the intention of the Senate to ignore as far as possible his claims to reward. From that moment Octavian broke with the Senate and began to intrigue for an understanding with Antonius.

The latter, reinforced by Ventidius and his three legions, was now encamped at Forum Julii. Twenty-four miles away, at Forum Voconii, lay Lepidus, who, as soon as he heard of Antonius's approach, moved closer. Lepidus, at this time, was trusted by very few. His reputation was bad, and his conduct since the murder of Julius had not been such as to inspire confidence. There can be little doubt that if he had declared himself openly on the side of the Senate he would have carried with him both Asinius Pollio and Munatius Plancus. But so long as he temporised they temporised also, and with seven legions — including the famous Tenth — under his command he was able to prevent Pollio and Plancus from moving. Moreover, even in March, if Pollio is to be believed, Lepidus was making speeches and writing to tell everybody that he was one with Antonius. He intercepted the couriers whom Pollio sent to Rome, and it became more and more evident that he would finally range himself on the side of his old friend, especially when letters arrived at Rome from him advocating peace. Decimus Brutus had seen the danger and had written an agitated note to Cicero begging him to make a last effort to keep that "weather-cock Lepidus" straight, though for his own part he was firmly convinced that he

meditated treachery. Decimus was right. Instead of attacking Antonius, Lepidus allowed his soldiers to mingle with the legionaries of the ex-Consul and, after a shew of compulsion, received him into his camp and joined forces with the man who had been declared a public enemy. Disgusted with the treason of his chief, Laterensis, the chief lieutenant of Lepidus, slew himself before the soldiers, but they fraternised with the Antonians, and at the end of May Antonius was again master of a powerful army. Lepidus surrendered to him the real command of the combined legions, and thus, instead of being a fugitive, Antonius was once more a formidable competitor for power.

The defection of Lepidus was the ruin of the senatorial cause in the western provinces. His treachery was contagious, and the two other governors of the Gallic and Spanish provinces wavered. Of these the stronger was Lucius Munatius Plancus. Judging from his subsequent career, a career so full of treachery that Velleius in a scathing phrase declares that he had "an itch for treason"—*morbo proditor*—and was constitutionally incapable of remaining loyal, we may safely infer that his repeated protestations to his friend Cicero had been insincere, and that he was only waiting to see which side would win. Yet for a time he had a strong personal motive to keep him honest to the Senate, inasmuch as Antonius was seeking to obtain Plancus's province of Gallia Comata for himself. This naturally threw Plancus into the arms of the Senate, and determined him to do his best to keep Lepidus loyal. Thus he was in

correspondence with Lepidus at the beginning of April, when he proposed to march to the support of Decimus at Mutina. But he started late. The battle of Mutina had already been fought when he crossed the Rhone, and the news reached him while he was still in the country of the Allobroges. At once he wrote to Rome pressing for reinforcements, and received a reply from Cicero imploring him to act boldly, not to wait for instructions, but to do what seemed best for the cause. "Be your own Senate," wrote Cicero, while still under the impression that Antonius was a ruined man, "and complete his destruction." Plancus crossed the Isara on May 12th and moved towards Lepidus, intending to join him if he remained loyal. He had marched south for two days, when Lepidus sent word to him to come no nearer, for he was strong enough to finish the business alone. Thereupon Plancus retired to the Isara, but on the 18th he again marched south, still negotiating. On the 29th Lepidus and Antonius joined camps, and Plancus hurriedly retraced his steps to Cularo, on the Isara, where he was joined by Decimus Brutus about the middle of June.

Octavian, meanwhile, was biding his time. His army had not moved since the battle of Mutina. He had declined to place his troops at the disposition of Decimus Brutus; he now declined to take orders from the Senate. Instead of acting as a general under the direction of the Executive, he took up the rôle of a general with whom the Executive must treat. Thus, while Decimus was marching first on the track of Antonius and after

wards, when Lepidus and Antonius had joined hands, was effecting a junction with Plancus, Octavian remained where he was, determined not to lose the advantage he possessed of being nearest to Rome. Cicero, indeed, had recognised as early as April that there was the stuff in the boy of which statesmen are made, real character, will, and insight, and that it might be a difficult matter for the Senate to keep a tight rein over him in the flush of honours and popularity. Yet on the whole he had had little doubt of his ability to manage him. But when Mutina had been relieved and Octavian refused to acknowledge Decimus as his Commander-in-chief, Cicero and the Senate began to shew impatience at these proofs of Octavian's independent spirit, and Cicero, in a fit of petulance, declared that the policy of the Senate towards the young man would be that of "kicking him up-stairs." They would give him honours and decorations and then quietly shelve him. The *bon mot* cost Cicero dear. Some one carried it to Octavian's ears, and Cicero had reason to repent his jingling play upon words — *laudandum adolescentem, ornandum, tollendum* — as the days passed by, and the truth of the situation in the North became known. The plight of the Constitutionalists grew graver as each courier came in. But, like the Bourbons, the Roman oligarchs never learned a lesson. Their appointment of a Commission of Ten to distribute lands among the soldiers, and their refusal to give Octavian a seat on the Board was a piece of gratuitous folly and party spite. It angered the

soldiers on whose loyalty their very lives depended, and was a plain intimation to Octavian that they meant at the very first opportunity to clip his wings. At the end of May Cicero's illusions were shattered; his serene confidence was gone. "I am utterly paralysed," he writes to Brutus: "the Senate, which was my instrument, is broken in my hands." The treasury was empty. None of the generals, nominally under senatorial control, could or would move a step. Their troops demanded the pay which was not forthcoming, and the emissaries of Antonius and Lepidus were busy tempting them from their allegiance. In despair Cicero wrote to Brutus and Cassius, urging them to come over at once with their armies and save the situation; but they did not even reply. The Senate still shewed a bold front and declared Lepidus a public enemy, but decrees were valueless when what was wanted was money and legions. Throughout the whole of July nothing was done. Cicero seems to have hoped that Decimus and Plancus would march to attack Antonius and Lepidus without delay, and that Octavian would again set his army in motion. But Plancus had no such expectation. In a striking letter written from his camp in Gaul on July 28th he cast the whole blame for the desperate straits to which the Senate had been reduced upon Octavian. He said that he had never ceased importuning Octavian to march up and join him, and that Octavian had uniformly replied that he was coming without delay. And so, while professing every regard for Octavian, he felt bound to declare,

more in sorrow than in anger, that they had to thank the boy for all their troubles. "That Antonius is alive to-day, that Lepidus has joined him, that they have an army which commands respect, and that they they are full of hopes and daring,—all this is due to Octavian." At last the Senate ordered Pollio in Further Spain to march towards Italy, Cornificius to embark two of his African legions, and Octavian to go to the support of Decimus and Plancus. Octavian's answer was decisive. He sent four hundred of his soldiers and centurions to Rome to demand their promised rewards.

It is difficult to understand why, in a crisis of such gravity, the Senate allowed the consulship to remain vacant for so many months after the deaths of Hirtius and Pansa. One would have expected that the first object of so sincere and devoted a constitutionalist as Cicero would be to proceed to the election of two safe men upon whose loyalty the Senate might implicitly depend. There were, of course, technical difficulties in the way. No one but a Consul or a Dictator could hold the consular comitia, and, while the two Consuls were dead, the office of Dictator had been formally abolished during the previous year. Nor could an interrex be appointed for electing Consuls until the *auspicia* became vested in the whole body of patricians, and this again was impossible as long as the *auspicia* were held by any patrician magistrates. Many of these magistrates were absent from Rome, and their voluntary resignations could not be obtained. There

was thus a deadlock of the sort which seems insurmountable to the rigid constitutionalist, but which a strong leader, supported by a strong party, would have resolutely brushed aside. Eventually the problem was solved by the appointment of two *privati* with consular powers to hold the consular comitia, a step which should have been taken much earlier, when it was still possible for the Senate to exercise a free choice. Yet the technical difficulties were not the only ones. Even more potent were the jealousies and ambitions to which the two vacant offices gave rise. Octavian lost not a moment in urging his claims, and his friends at Rome began a vigorous canvas on his behalf. But Cicero opposed them stoutly, and, as he says, exposed in the Senate "the source of their most criminal designs." The later historians, Appian, Dion Cassius, and Plutarch, agree in saying that Octavian approached Cicero with the proposal that they two should be the new Consuls. There is no trace of this in Cicero's own letters; but it is unwise to dismiss the story as a mere fabrication. Such a proposal might well have emanated from Octavian, desirous as he was of obtaining a definite constitutional position in the State, and knowing, too, that Cicero himself would dearly like to be elected to a second consulship. We are told that Cicero advised the Senate to make a friend of Octavian, because he had an army, and to give him as colleague a judicious, elderly statesman; and Appian goes on to say that the Senate laughed outright at the suggestion, because they knew Cicero's hankering after office, and that when


Rhodanus F.
LUGUDUNUM
Allobroges
Isara F.
Rhodanus F.
Confluentes
Druentia F.
FORUM VOCONII
MASSILIA
FORUM JULII
Alpes Graiae
Alpes Cottiae
Alpes Maritimae
EPOREDIA
VERCELLAE
Padus F.
GALLIA CISALPINA
DERTONA
POLLENTIA
GENUA
VADA SABATIA
Appenninus Mons
MUTINA
FORUM GALLORUM
BONONIA
FORUM CORNELII
ANCONA
SPOLETIUM
ROMA
ILLYRICUM
THE CAMPAIGN ABOUT MUTINA
50 100 150 200
KILOMETER
50 100
ROMAN MILES

he spoke of "a judicious elderly statesman" he meant none other than himself.

Whether any such speech was made or not, it is certain that Octavian had few followers in the Senate, which was essentially anti-Cæsarian, and Pompeian both in sympathy and policy. Cicero, who never quite abandoned the hope that he might still play the part of Nestor to Octavian's Telemachus, might be deluded for a moment into entertaining the specious proposal for a joint consulship, but Cicero's party were to a man against Octavian, and Cicero himself speedily came out in strong opposition to him. Nevertheless, the boy-general, whose veteran army lay nearest to Rome, would not be ignored, and it would seem that the Senate sought to compromise matters with him by offering him the prætorship, and appointing him as colleague of Decimus in the war against Antonius. But, as usual, they misjudged the man with whom they had to deal. Octavian was now acting in league with Antonius, and had no intention of marching to attack him. His policy was to pick a quarrel with the Senate, and the opportunity lay ready to his hand. Addressing his legions, he denounced the Senate for the indignities it had heaped upon him by refusing him the triumph and the consulship which he had earned by his services, and by requiring his army to enter upon a second campaign before being paid for the first. He advised them to send their centurions to Rome and press for payment. The centurions went, and received the answer that the Senate would send its own delegates. But these delegates were instructed to

address themselves, in the absence of Octavian, to the two legions which had deserted from Antonius, and they endeavoured to persuade the troops to rest their hopes not on their general, but upon the Senate, and to betake themselves to the camp of Decimus on the Isara, where they would receive their promised donative. The intrigue was clumsily conceived. The legions refused to hear the delegates except in the presence of their commander, and Octavian again harangued his army in an impassioned speech, in which he declared that his safety and theirs alike depended upon his obtaining the vacant consulship. Once more, therefore, the centurions set out for Rome, to demand this time the consulship for their general. Nor were these blunt soldiers of the camp overawed by their surroundings as they were ushered into the Senate House. When they were told that Octavian was too young for the dignity of the chief magistracy, they replied that the State had profited in days gone by from the consulships of the youthful Scipios, and one of them, bolder than the rest, did not hesitate to throw back his military cloak, and, pointing to his sword, exclaimed: "This shall make him Consul, if you refuse." Scarcely less significant than this open threat was the demand that the decree declaring Antonius a public enemy should be repealed, an unmistakable proof that Antonius and Octavian were now acting in unison. But the Senate still refused compliance, and the centurions returned to camp. As soon as the army learnt that the embassy had proved a failure they clamored to be led against the city, and

Octavian, nothing loth, struck camp and crossed the Rubicon in the early days of August.

With eight legions under his command, and their full complement of cavalry and auxiliaries, Octavian had little reason to be apprehensive of failure. Between him and Rome there was not a single veteran legion to contest his passage. The road was open; he had but to march straight in. The only troops the Senate still had at its disposal were a legion of recruits which Pansa had raised and left behind him when he marched towards Mutina with the rest of the Italian levies. Consequently, as soon as news came that Octavian was advancing towards Rome, the whole city was panic-stricken, and the Senate hastened with ignominious celerity to pass resolutions granting Octavian all he asked for, and promising his soldiers a donative of 5000 instead of 2500 drachmæ. Messengers were hurriedly despatched to the General to inform him of these decisions, but no sooner had they started than the senators repented their craven conduct and rescinded the decrees they had just passed. Two legions had arrived at Ostia from Africa, and their timely appearance infused a momentary gleam of hope into the timid constitutionalists. They remembered with shame the glorious traditions of the past, and determined either to save their liberty or die for it. All who were of military age were called to arms and the city was placed in a posture of defence. News of this sudden change of front reached Octavian just as he was giving audience to the Senate's delegates, who were promising him full

submission. They withdrew at once in confusion and Octavian immediately pressed forward. He seized without resistance a position just beyond the Quirinal Hill, and, as he held his troops well in check, the population poured forth and welcomed his approach. The next day he entered Rome with a strong guard: the three Republican legions, in spite of their generals, transferred themselves to his side, and the farcical opposition of the Senate was at an end. Cicero himself sought and obtained an interview with the victor and urged a strong claim to indulgence. Octavian received him with the bitter sarcasm that he was the last of his friends to come and see him. Yet the very next night, when an idle rumour got abroad that the Fourth and Martian legions had deserted from Octavian to the Senate, Cicero greedily accepted it and the Senators hastily assembled in the Curia. They had scarcely met when the canard was exposed, and the meeting silently melted away.



CHAPTER V

THE TRIUMVIRATE AND THE CAMPAIGN OF PHILIPPI

43–42 B.C.

"THE boy" was in possession of Rome and, on August 19th, he was elected Consul, receiving as his colleague his kinsman, Quintus Pedius. Octavian acted at this critical moment with rare judgment and coolness. The comitia were held in due form, and the candidate made a parade of self-denial by abstaining even from entering the Forum. Cicero and those who had acted with him silently disappeared from the scene, apprehensive of danger, but as yet unmolested. The remnant of the Senate hastened to comply with the young Consul's wishes. They rescinded the decrees against Dolabella, against Antonius, and against Lepidus. They passed a resolution for the condemnation of Cæsar's murderers, who were formally interdicted from fire and water. And then, when he had paid his soldiers 2500 drachmæ a head from the State treasures on the Janiculum, and the curies had once more ratified his legal adoption by Julius,

Octavian was ready to quit the city and march north with his army to intercept the retreat of Decimus Brutus and complete his understanding with Antonius and Lepidus.

The constitutionalist party in Rome had fallen with a crash. Brutus and Cassius, with a cynical disregard for the fate of their staunchest champion, had not sent so much as a single cohort to help him during these months of stress. Cicero, indeed, had seen all his props snap and break one by one. The Governors of the western provinces had gone over to the enemy. Pollio, marching from Spain with three legions, had got no farther than the headquarters of Lepidus and Antonius. He could not pass them; he therefore joined them. And it was through Pollio's influence and mediation that Plancus became reconciled with Antonius, and transferred himself and his army to the enemies of the Senate. Decimus Brutus alone remained faithful. For him there was no room in the Antonian camp; with him there could be no accommodation. Deserted by Plancus, he decided to risk the desperate hazards of a long march across the Alps, and then make his way through Aquileia and Illyricum to the side of his brother Marcus in Macedonia. His ten legions, mostly composed of recruits, refused to follow him. One by one they deserted his standard and joined either Octavian or Antonius, until Decimus was left with no more than three hundred horsemen, who finally dwindled down to ten. Disguising himself as a Celt, he and his little band at length fell into the hands of a brigand chief, named

Camillus, who sent word to Antonius of the prize he had taken, and was at once bidden to forward the head of his captive. Such was the miserable end of Decimus, one of the few able soldiers who supported the sinking cause of the Republic. By his death and by the loss of his legions the constitutionalists were left without a single general or a single army west of the Adriatic. They now waited with shivering apprehension to learn the fate their conquerors would impose.

Nor had they to wait long. Antonius and Lepidus, marching south with their troops, met Octavian in the neighbourhood of Bononia. A conference was arranged to take place on a little island of the river Rhenus, which was approached by a bridge from either bank of the stream. It was agreed that each of the Generals should be escorted by five legions to within a certain distance of the river; that each should advance with a body-guard of three hundred horsemen to the head of the bridge, and that the three chiefs should then cross unarmed to the islet in the middle. Such were the careful precautions taken against treachery by those who were about to divide amongst themselves the dominion and the spoils of the Roman Republic. For three days the conference lasted, and it was then announced to the expectant armies that their leaders had formed themselves into a Triumvirate for the reconstitution of the State. They were to be appointed for five years with full powers to select the occupants of the yearly magistracies; Octavian was to resign the consulship in favour of Ventidius for the remainder

of the year; and the provinces were to be divided into three spheres of influence,— to borrow a term from modern diplomacy,— in which each should be supreme and secure from the meddling of his colleagues. The Gallic provinces were to fall to Antonius, with the exception of Gallia Narbonensis, which, together with the two Spains, was allotted to Lepidus. Octavian, on the other hand, was to rule over Sicily, Sardinia, and Africa. Italy was to remain neutral ground, but Lepidus, with Plancus for colleague, was to be consul for the ensuing year, and, in consideration of the advantages which this office would give him, was to retain only three legions, and divide his remaining seven among his colleagues for the prosecution of the war against Brutus and Cassius. Three were to join the standard of Octavian, and four were to transfer themselves to Antonius, thus raising the armies of both to twenty legions each. The soldiers were to be rewarded for their past services by a liberal grant of money and lands, and, as ready cash was hard to find, the Triumvirs did not scruple to apportion among their troops eighteen of the most flourishing towns in the south, as well as others in the north, of Italy, which were thus treated as though they had been the spoils of foreign war.

Then swiftly and remorselessly fell the blow for which the constitutionalists had been waiting. During their sinister deliberations upon the islet of the Rhenus, the Triumvirs had decreed not only the subversion of the Republic but the ruin of their private enemies. They had determined to kill off

their principal antagonists and to safeguard their position by a massacre. The evil precedents which Marius and Sulla had established were to be followed once again. At first only seventeen names appeared in the fatal list. But the city was already in a state of wild panic, for the Triumvirs had despatched their executioners in advance, so that they might strike down their victims without warning. Rome was suddenly startled one night to learn that four senators had been slain in the streets and that their murderers were hunting for others. Appian describes how, as the news spread, every man thought that he was the person for whom the pursuers were searching, and how, in order to stay the frenzied alarm, Pedius, the Consul, hurried round with heralds to the houses of the leading citizens and implored them to wait until daylight, when he hoped to obtain more accurate information as to the purpose of the Triumvirs. Then, on the morrow, he published the list of seventeen names and pledged the public faith that these were all. Stricken with sudden illness, Pedius died the following night, and was spared the knowledge that he had pledged his word to a falsehood. But his assurance had calmed the city, and so, when the Triumvirs entered Rome soon after, on three separate days, each with a prætorian cohort and one legion, the Republicans thought that the blood of the unfortunate seventeen would suffice to slake their new masters' thirst for vengeance. But no sooner had the people passed a law ratifying the appointment of the Triumvirate than a second proscription list, containing a hundred and

thirty names was published, followed shortly afterwards by a third, containing a hundred and fifty more. Nor was that all. New names were constantly added, and for weeks Rome and Italy lived in a state of hideous terror, while the bloody work was being carried on and the soldiers were hunting down their victims to destruction.

Appian has fortunately preserved for us what purports to be the text of the manifesto issued by the Triumvirs, in which they sought to justify their policy of murder. They went straight to the point. Cæsar, they said, had been assassinated by the men whom he had pardoned and admitted to his friendship; for their part, they preferred to forestall their enemies rather than suffer at their hands. Those whom they now proscribed had lavished honours upon Cæsar's assassins, and had declared Lepidus and Antonius public enemies. They had clearly shewn what course they would have taken had they proved victorious; was it reasonable, therefore, to expect that the Triumvirs would allow them to take advantage of their absence and plot their ruin while they were grappling with Brutus and Cassius? So ran their argument. In a word, they justified themselves by the cruel necessities of the situation. But their plea has not been accepted by the generations which have come after them. History, with unanimous verdict, has condemned the proscription as a monstrous massacre. Still, while we condemn, candour requires that we should at least ask what the policy of the victims would have been if they had had it in their power to slay or spare those who now

condemned them to die. What would Cicero have counselled if Antonius had lain at his mercy? There can be no hesitation as to the answer. He would have taken his enemy's life with as little compunction as he had taken the lives of Lentulus and Cethegus during the Catilinarian conspiracy. Cicero, though one of the gentlest and most humane spirits of antiquity, gloried in the assassination of Julius Cæsar. The memory of the Ides of March had been his chief consolation during the last two years of his life, tempered only by the regret that, when the Liberators slew the master, they spared the man. "How I wish you had invited me to that banquet of yours on the Ides," he had written to Trebonius, "there would have been no leavings." If these were the real sentiments of Cicero — and the constant repetition of the thought in his Letters leaves no room for doubt — what had Cicero to expect from Antonius but death? "I don't approve your clemency," Cicero had written to Brutus in Macedonia; "I am convinced that as a policy it is wrong, and that, if it be adopted, there will never be any hope of ending the civil wars." What is this, again, but a naked justification of proscription, a definite advocacy of the principle of killing off your foes when they fall into your power? We cannot believe that Cicero would have approved a general proscription and reign of terror. His humanity would have revolted at the sight of indiscriminate slaughter. But his party would have had no such scruples. If Pompeius had defeated Julius Cæsar, there would have been another Sullan massacre. The Optimates

had gloried in the prospect of exterminating their enemies. Julius, on the other hand, tried clemency and lost his life by the rash experiment. And it is idle to deny that the Pompeians, who followed Cicero's lead, were prepared to take the same vengeance upon Antonius and Lepidus, which these in their hour of triumph now took upon them. "*Væ victis*" had been the cry with which the combatants on both sides had taken up arms.

Moreover, the Triumvirs had still the eastern half of the Republic to conquer, where Brutus and Cassius were in arms with a formidable army. If, then, they had spared their enemies, with what confidence could they have marched to the East, leaving Cicero behind to inflame the multitude against them and to persuade the Senate once more to declare them public enemies, should the fortune of war incline even momentarily to the side of the Republicans? While Cicero lived, the Triumvirs could not feel secure, and though, doubtless, Antonius claimed him as his special victim, we can scarcely hesitate to believe that both Octavian and Lepidus willingly acquiesced in placing his name first on the list of the proscribed. The patriot statesman—and with all his faults, no Roman better deserved that honourable name—was the common enemy of the enemies of the Republic. But if Cicero was marked down for destruction, not so much to gratify the private animosity of Antonius as because, even in the hour of his failure, he threatened danger to the Triumvirate, there were crowds of more obscure victims, for whose appearance on the proscription lists reasons

of state could offer no pretext. The Triumvirs had drawn up the lists of the doomed in cold blood. Each had his own special enemies, and in many cases the enemy of the one was the friend of the other two. It came, therefore, to be a barter of one's friends and even of one's relatives. Antonius sacrificed an uncle to the resentment of his colleagues; Lepidus and Plancus each wrote the death-warrant of a brother. Then when reasons of state and private hatred had been satisfied, another and perhaps even more powerful motive came into play. The most pressing need of the Triumvirs was money. The public treasury was empty. Not a drachma of revenue was coming in from the East, and vast sums were required in view of the military operations for which the Triumvirs were preparing. Confiscation seemed to afford the simplest and readiest method of obtaining the necessary supplies, and the Triumvirs did not hesitate to place upon the proscription list the names of rich men whose sole crime was that they were rich while the new masters of the State were poor. The property of the victims was confiscated and sold for what it would fetch to the highest bidders; and then, having started the work of murder, the Triumvirs found that they could not control it. Numbers of men, whose names were never on the fatal list at all, were wantonly murdered by their private enemies, and the lurid pages of Appian shew how from end to end of the Italian peninsula the hateful massacre went on.

The odium and guilt of the proscription must rest upon the Triumvirs equally. Suetonius, indeed,

tells us that Octavian at the outset opposed the suggestion, but that when the bloody work had once begun he prosecuted it with greater zest than either of his colleagues. While they, in certain cases, shewed themselves amenable to influence or entreaty, he alone stood out resolutely for sparing none. Moreover, a story was current that when at length the lists were closed, and Lepidus, speaking in the Senate, held out hopes of a milder administration in the future, Octavian spoke in quite a different strain, and declared that, so far as he was concerned, he had determined to reserve to himself an absolutely free hand. Against this we have to set the statement of Velleius that Octavian was driven to consent to the proscription by the insistence of his colleagues. But as Velleius throws the entire blame upon Antonius, whom he paints in the blackest colours, his testimony must be taken with reserve. The probabilities are that Octavian required very little persuasion to fall in with the views of his older associates. There was little of the generous enthusiasm of youth in his disposition. He could see, as well as they, the advantage to be reaped by the removal of their most dangerous antagonists, and, though he may have regretted the harsh fate which was to fall upon Cicero, for whom he entertained a strong personal regard, he made no effort to save him. Cicero stood in his path. Cicero had not scrupled to throw him aside as soon as he thought he and his party could do without him. In after years Augustus, the Emperor, might remember with emotion "the great man and lover of

his country," whose death-sentence he had signed, but Octavian, the Triumvir of twenty, was pitiless. His only standard of conduct in those early days was self-interest. Other considerations moved him not. He could not afford to be generous until he was supreme.

The Triumvirs had thus consolidated their position by the murder of their leading opponents, and replenished their treasury by the plunder of the confiscated estates. At the earnest entreaty of the troops, whose Cæsarian sympathies made them impatient of the rivalry between Antonius and Octavian, the new alliance was cemented by the marriage of Octavian to a step-daughter of Antonius—the daughter of his wife Fulvia by her first husband, Clodius the tribune. Lepidus and Plancus entered upon their consulships and celebrated the unearned triumphs voted to them by the obsequious Senate, while active preparations were set on foot for prosecuting the war in the regions which still held out for the Republic. In Africa, where Cornificius refused to acknowledge the authority of Sextius, who was sent by Octavian to take over the province as his nominee, the issue was speedily decided, for, after a sharp campaign, Cornificius was slain in battle. But a more formidable antagonist appeared in Sextus Pompeius, who, with a well-equipped fleet, had eagerly accepted the offer made to him by the Senate in its days of despair, that he should become commander of the naval forces of the Republic. Quitting Spain, where for years he had maintained a foothold against the lieutenants whom Cæsar had

sent against him, Sextus swooped down upon Sicily, besieged the governor, and forced him to surrender, and thus, gaining possession of the whole island, shewed bold defiance to the Triumvirs. As Sicily had fallen to Octavian's portion in the division of the provinces, he collected a fleet, which he placed under the command of Salvidienus, and himself marched down to Rhegium with an army to co-operate with his lieutenant. A naval engagement followed, in which the advantage lay with Sextus Pompeius; but then, in answer to a pressing summons from Antonius, Octavian was obliged to abandon for the time being the conquest of the island and make what haste he could to Brundisium, where his colleague lay waiting to transport his troops across the Adriatic into Macedonia. The campaign which was to end on the battle-field of Philippi in the utter ruin of the Republicans had now begun.

It is difficult to understand the strategy adopted by Brutus and Cassius with regard to the disposition of their forces at so critical a time. Cassius held the East and was preparing an expedition against Egypt, whose Queen, Cleopatra, was in league with the Triumvirs. Brutus then summoned him to a conference at Smyrna, whither he had withdrawn his army from Macedonia, and there they held their council of war. According to Appian, Brutus was alarmed at the intelligence that Norbanus and Decidius Saxa, two of Antonius's lieutenants, had already crossed the Adriatic with eight legions, and urged that they should unite their forces at once and march towards Macedonia, in order to check the

forward movement of the Triumvirs. Cassius, on the other hand, insisted that the armies of the Triumvirs might safely be ignored for the present and that their first concern should be to crush the Rhodians and the Lycians, who were friendly to Antonius and were possessed of squadrons which might otherwise harass their rear. The Egyptian fleet also required to be watched, and, in the meantime, he counted upon the difficulty which the Triumvirs would experience in obtaining the necessary supplies for their armies to cripple their activity. The counsel of Cassius prevailed, and while that general, with characteristic energy, captured Rhodes and levied a tribute of 8500 talents from the inhabitants, Brutus subdued the Lycians, took Zanthus and Patara, and exacted from the towns of Asia Minor ten years' tribute in advance. Then their admiral, Murcus, who had been stationed off the Peloponnese to intercept the fleet which Cleopatra had fitted out, learnt that a storm had shattered it off the Libyan coast and that the Queen herself had returned to Egypt. He was thus free to operate in the Adriatic and moved at once to blockade Antonius in the port of Brundisium, and prevent the transportation of his army. It was then that Antonius summoned Octavian to his assistance from his unsuccessful campaign against Sextus; and the question of the moment was whether Murcus could establish an effective blockade. He failed to do so. Favoured by fortune and their own daring, the Triumvirs succeeded in eluding the blockading fleet, though this had been reinforced by a squadron of fifty ships under Domitius Ahenobarbus, and

Murcus had now at his command no fewer than 130 ships of war and an even greater number of smaller vessels. The transports crossed and recrossed without mishap, and though the passage continued to be hazardous and the presence of Murcus was a constant source of peril, the whole army of the Triumvirs was successfully transported. The naval supremacy of the Republicans which, according to the accepted theory of to-day, ought to have kept Antonius and Octavian prisoners and helpless in the port of Brundisium, proved impotent to prevent the crossing, and Murcus and Ahenobarbus did not succeed in getting a blow home until the very day when the fortunes of their cause were ruined at Philippi. Then they intercepted a few triremes which were convoying across a long string of transports, containing two legions, a prætorian cohort, and four squadrons of horse, and destroyed the whole flotilla.

The Triumvirs thus enjoyed more than their reasonable share of good luck. They were favoured, too, in another particular. Brutus apparently had withdrawn all his legious from Macedonia and had not left a single garrison to dispute the advance of the enemy. The eight legions under Norbanus and Saxa had pushed on, without encountering any opposition, right through Macedonia, and had entered Thrace before Brutus and Cassius moved up the coast of Asia Minor, crossed the Hellespont and reviewed their army at Cardia on the gulf of Melas. They then found that Norbanus and Saxa had seized the two difficult passes of the Sapæans and Corpileans, through which ran the only available

road. By the aid of the fleet they were able to outflank the enemy, who were obliged to vacate the first of the two passes, and a friendly Thracian chief disclosed to them a circuitous and waterless track along the side of the Sapæan mountain, whereby they could again turn their opponents' position. Norbanus, finding his line of retreat threatened, retired in the night towards Amphipolis, and the Republican generals advanced to Philippi, where they chose an advantageous site for a camp and were joined by the troops who had followed round the coast-line on shipboard. There they awaited the approach of Antonius and Octavian, and looked forward with confidence to a battle on ground of their own choosing.

Yet it is beyond dispute that the Republican chiefs had committed a blunder of the very first magnitude in leaving Amphipolis undefended and making a present to their enemies of the town which commanded the passage of the river Strymon and the entrance into Thrace from Macedonia. Amphipolis was the key of Thrace, and so accomplished a Hellenist as Brutus must have been well aware of the struggles which had taken place for its possession in ancient times, first during the Peloponnesian War, and later in the struggle between Philip of Macedon and Athens. The Republicans, as masters of the sea, could have held it without difficulty, even with a small garrison, while their main army had been withdrawn to Asia Minor, but, with almost inconceivable fatuity, they allowed it to fall into the hands of Antonius. The latter had given Norbanus

orders to hurry on and seize it while Brutus was still on the other side of the Hellespont, and he was naturally delighted to find on his arrival that his lieutenant had fortified it and made it secure against attack. Antonius, therefore, leaving a single legion to hold the place, moved on with his main army and encamped within sight of the entrenchments of Brutus and Cassius. Octavian, owing to illness, had been obliged to remain behind for a time at Epidamnus, but when he heard that the two armies were in touch he insisted on being carried forward in a litter, and brought up his legions to join his colleague.

Brutus and Cassius had chosen their ground well. The high-road ran through a narrow plain, flanked on either side by a range of hills on which they had pitched their camp. Across the intervening space they built a connecting chain of fortifications. Near by ran the river Gangites, and at their back lay the sea, only eight stades distant, from which they drew their supplies. Brutus's exposed flank was protected by high cliffs; Cassius's flank rested upon a marsh which ran down to the sea. The advantage of position lay entirely with them. Time, also, was on their side. They had abundance of supplies; their line of communications was absolutely safe. They were in Wellington's favourite position — holding high ground, with their ships as a base. The Triumvirs, on the other hand, were in a far more dangerous plight. Amphipolis was two hundred and fifty stades away, and they had to subsist on the countries in their rear. They could draw

nothing from Spain or Africa, which were closed by the squadrons of Sextus; the Adriatic was blockaded by Murcus and Domitius, and Thessaly and Macedonia were already exhausted by the strain which had been imposed upon them. Cassius, especially, who knew far better than his colleague the difficulties of maintaining a large army in the field, strongly counselled delay. Antonius did his best to force an issue. The very boldness with which he had advanced right up to the Republican encampments — a boldness which astonished his opponents — bore witness to the urgency of his situation. And so he endeavoured to cut a passage through the marsh and penetrate to the rear of Cassius's camp. The manœuvre was discovered and thwarted by Cassius, and Antonius then led his troops to the assault of Cassius's main position, and brought on a general engagement.

Our accounts of the first battle of Philippi are confused and contradictory. According to Plutarch, the Republicans had held a council of war on the previous night and had decided to fight on Brutus's recommendation, though Cassius still counselled inactivity. Appian's story is that the battle began with the charge of the Antonians, and that the soldiers of Brutus, watching the enemy moving to the assault, rushed impetuously down upon the camp of Octavian. The legions of Octavian broke and fled. His camp was captured and pillaged, and the Triumvir himself, still prostrate from his illness, only just managed to escape from his litter in time. Rushing up, the soldiers pierced it in triumph with

their swords, and the rumour spread that Octavian himself had been slain. But while Brutus was carrying all before him, Cassius, on the other wing, was suffering an equally decisive defeat. The Antonians stormed his camp, and Cassius took refuge in flight. Retiring to the top of an eminence from which he hoped to view the battle-ground, he noticed a number of horsemen approaching and sent his companion, Titinius, to reconnoitre and see if they were friends. As Titinius approached they opened their ranks to let him pass among them, and one of their number embraced him. Cassius, noticing the act and rashly leaping to the conclusion that his friend was slain, upbraided himself with having lived too long and begged his freedman, Pindarus, to inflict the fatal blow. Pindarus was never seen again, but the corpse of Cassius was found with the head severed from the body. Thus, in a moment of reckless folly, the ablest of the two Republican generals consented to his own death, and died not knowing that his colleague had gained an entire success. "The last of the Romans," as Brutus called him when bewailing his loss, by this unsoldierly act contributed more to the ruin of his cause and the discouragement of his soldiers than did the defeat which he had that day sustained. The next morning Antonius again drew out his men in battle array, as though eager to resume the contest, but when Brutus followed his example and offered to accept the challenge Antonius withdrew his men into their quarters.

Twenty days elapsed before the combat was re-

newed. In the meantime, news had been brought to the Triumvirs of the disaster which had overtaken their fleet and transports in the Adriatic, and they grew doubly anxious about the insufficiency of their supplies. Daily, therefore, they led out their troops to offer battle to the enemy, but Brutus remained quiet in his unassailable position, reorganising and encouraging the shattered legions of Cassius and promising them the spoil of the Greek cities as an incentive to steadfastness and loyalty. Officers and men chafed at such prolonged inaction. The senators in his camp thrust their ignorant advice upon him as they had done upon Pompeius before Pharsalus. They taunted him with cowardice, encouraged the troops to murmur against his leadership, and, in the end, prevailed upon him, in defiance of his better judgment, to stake his all upon the issue of a second battle. Appian, indeed, suggests that Brutus distrusted the loyalty of such of his legions as had fought under Cæsar and feared lest they should make common cause with the veteran troops of Antonius and Octavian. The determination with which they faced the enemy acquits them of this reproach. In all Roman history there was no more stubbornly contested fight. Both armies advanced slowly but resolutely. The usual preliminary tactics, the exchange of clouds of arrows, stones, and javelins, were dispensed with. This was a battle of the legionaries alone. The front lines of the opposing armies met and fought out their quarrel in single combat. When they fell, others took their place. At length the Octavians gradually

pressed back those in front of them as if, in the picturesque words of Appian, they were putting in motion a heavy machine. The Republicans retired at first slowly, then in confusion, and finally they broke and ran. Part escaped to the fortified camp; others sought safety in flight and were cut down by the Antonians, whose general "was everywhere, and everywhere attacking." When night fell, Brutus was cut off from his camp and retired to the summit of a neighbouring hill with the remnant of four legions. The next day he would have made a desperate effort to cut his way through, but the spirit of his followers was broken. The officers, who had egged him on to fight, now sullenly told him to shift for himself. They had tempted fortune often enough and would not throw away their last chance of coming to terms with their victor. To a Roman there was but one course left open, and Brutus died on the sword of his friend, Strato. His army no sooner learnt that their leader was dead than they sent envoys to the Triumvirs to sue for the pardon which was promptly promised them, and the legions, to the number of 14,000 men, were transferred to the standards of Antonius and Octavian.

The carnage in the two battles of Philippi had been heavy. Brutus, Cassius, and a host of others, bearing the proudest names of the senatorial families, perished, and with them fell the Roman Republic. They disdained to survive the liberty for which they had taken up, first, the cowardly dagger of the assassin and then the honourable sword of the soldier. It is not necessary in this place to attempt



MARCUS BRUTUS.

FROM THE BUST IN THE MUSEUM OF THE CAPITOL IN ROME (VISCONTI).

(*Baumeister.*)

to weigh their characters and their actions in the balance. But it may be pointed out how strangely even their memories have experienced the vicissitudes of fortune. For centuries after their death they were hailed as the champions of liberty, as the vindicators of the old Roman spirit, as the dauntless friends of freedom, and as the last of the Romans. Poets have sung their glories; their names have been invoked in every political revolution against absolutism; their example has nerved the arm of tyrannicides and stimulated democracies to rise in angry revolt. But modern criticism has rudely torn them from their pedestal. It has shewn how selfish, how narrow, how essentially oligarchical were the liberties which they championed; how impotent was the Senate to rule a world-wide empire; how black was the treachery of the ingrates who slew their patron; how vacillating and feeble were the hands they laid on the helm of the State; how reluctant and suspicious was the support they tendered to Cicero; how even the epithet of "virtuous" must be denied to the student and philosopher, Brutus; while in the crisis of his life the experienced soldier, Cassius, gave way to petulant and womanish despair. And yet, when all is said, they were the real representatives of the Republic, representing its virtues as well as its vices, its weakness as well as its strength, its nobility as well as its meanness. Imitators they left behind them, but no successors.



CHAPTER VI

THE PERUSIAN WAR: RENEWAL OF THE TRIUMVIRATE

41–36 B.C.

THE victors of Philippi speedily went their separate paths. Antonius, with a powerful army, undertook to reduce the East to submission, while Octavian returned to Italy to settle the veterans in their military colonies. Nor did they consult Lepidus in the new arrangements. While they had been campaigning in Macedonia, rumours of check and disaster had been current in Rome, and their colleague, the Consul, was strongly suspected of intriguing with Sextus Pompeius. Consequently, Antonius and Octavian assigned to themselves the supreme command in Gallia Narbonensis and the Spanish provinces, which had been given to Lepidus at the conference near Bononia, but it was agreed that if Lepidus cleared himself to Octavian's satisfaction he should be granted compensation elsewhere. Cisalpine Gaul was incorporated and placed on a footing of equality with the rest of Italy — an old scheme of Julius — and then, after dismissing

from military service the soldiers who had served their full time, with the exception of eight thousand who volunteered to remain with the eagles, the Triumvirs parted — Antonius for the East, Octavian for the West. Antonius had chosen the easier and more congenial task. His march was absolutely unopposed. The provinces submitted one by one without a blow, and the conqueror imposed upon them his imperious will. On the cities which had resisted the Republican chiefs and suffered heavily at their hands he bestowed his lavish favours, but those which had espoused their cause only to be plundered he spoiled anew. Brutus and Cassius had wrung ten years' tribute in advance from Asia; Antonius bluntly demanded a like contribution, cynically avowing that he was in pressing need of money and that the provincials might consider themselves fortunate that he asked no more. Continuing his triumphal march, he reached Cilicia. There he met the Queen of Egypt, who, with supreme confidence in the potency of her charms to captivate the pleasure-loving Antonius, had travelled to Tarsus in order to offer excuses and obtain forgiveness for her failure to send a fleet to the aid of the triumviral forces. Cleopatra conquered with a glance and easily persuaded Antonius to return with her to Alexandria, where he spent the autumn and the winter of 41 B.C. among the riotous pleasures of the Egyptian capital, while his troops rusted with inactivity and he himself allowed his ambition to sleep.

Octavian had a much sterner task to face. To

establish his control over Rome and the West was a vastly more difficult undertaking than to march at the head of a victorious army through the unresisting East. It must be carefully borne in mind — though the temptation to forget it is strong — that the prestige of the victory won at Philippi and the chief credit for the successful issue of a most hazardous campaign rested not with him but with Antonius. Octavian's share in the triumph had been small. The expedition against Sextus for the recovery of Sicily had been an inglorious fiasco, and his camp had been stormed by the soldiers of Brutus at the first battle of Philippi. It was Antonius, therefore, who was regarded by the Roman world as the real victor and as the dominant personality of the Triumvirate, and Octavian only held the second place in popular estimation. Moreover, his continued ill-health flattered the hopes of his enemies that he would not live long to trouble them. The anxieties and privations of the recent campaign had not failed to aggravate his malady, and, on reaching Brundisium, his enfeebled constitution utterly broke down. He lay for some weeks between life and death, and a report that he had actually succumbed was widely believed. When he recovered, therefore, and made his way to Rome, he soon found himself confronted by a most formidable cabal.

So far as is known, no opposition had been offered by the Republican admirals, Murcus and Ahenobarbus, to the return of Octavian and his legions across the Adriatic. They still kept the seas and attracted to themselves the broken remnants of the lost cause,

but they allowed Octavian an unmolested passage—another striking proof of their incapacity to turn to practical advantage their naval supremacy. Octavian had first to deal with Lepidus, whose consulship had now expired. This clumsy soldier and still clumsier intriguer, who had owed his partnership in the Triumvirate not to his own abilities but to the accident that he had had so many legions under his command, was practically helpless in the absence of his patron and protector, Antonius; and when Octavian offered him the African provinces, in lieu of Gallia Narbonensis and the two Spains, Lepidus accepted without demur this curtailment of his dignities. Octavian had then to satisfy the time-expired troops. The soldiers demanded the Italian cities which had been selected for them before the opening of the campaign; the cities marked out for ruin claimed either that the whole of Italy should bear the burden, or that they should receive full compensation. Their inhabitants flocked in crowds to Rome to appeal to the sympathies of the Roman people and to the mercy of the young Triumvir. The former was easily won; the latter was hopeless. Octavian dared not offend or disappoint the legionaries. If they declared against him his fall from power was certain to be even more rapid than had been his rise, and as there was no public money wherewith to compensate the victims, he was bound to carry through this piece of brutal injustice, even though he deplored its necessity. The sympathies of the Roman crowd were cheap and ineffectual. They dreaded the professional soldiers who were

now the real arbiters of the Roman State. The shrewder among them could see that by settling colonies of old soldiers in the Italian peninsula their rulers were practically creating a veteran reserve, upon which they might draw at any moment when they required an army. The cause of the Italian cities, therefore, was warmly espoused by all who had any quarrel with the Triumvirs and by all the supporters of the old régime.

Octavian, however, had as yet but few staunch friends. The older senators, who had held office under Julius and the Republic, preferred to attach themselves to the faction of Antonius, who seemed so much the stronger of the two. These now found their leader in Lucius Antonius, a brother of the Triumvir, who, with Servilius Isauricus, was Consul for the year 41. Fulvia, the wife of Marcus Antonius, was also in Rome, actively engaged in watching the interests of her husband, and Manius, his procurator, was zealously devoted to his absent chief. Their first object was to delay the settlement of the military colonies until Antonius should return home, in order that Octavian might not reap all the credit for giving the veterans their reward. Then, when the soldiers pressed for immediate settlement, they induced Octavian to allow the colony leaders of Antonius's legionaries to be chosen from Antonius's own friends, and Fulvia and her children visited the camps, beseeching the soldiers not to forget the benefits which they owed to their old commander. The Italian cities were ruthlessly despoiled. Not alone in the south of Italy, but also

in the Transpadane region, the rural proprietors were ejected from their farms without the slightest compensation, and to the seething discontent aroused by this measure of confiscation there was soon added a fresh source of trouble and danger. Rome and Italy were threatened with famine. Sextus Pompeius, still master of Sicily, had received numerous contingents of ships and men from the remnants of the Republican army and navy. He had been joined by Murcus with two legions, five hundred archers, and eighty ships, and, in full command of the sea, he was now in a position to prevent any Spanish or African grain ships from entering the Tiber. His galleys ravaged the neighbouring shore of Italy, and it was absolutely necessary for Octavian to undertake a campaign against him. But his hands were tied. Disturbances had broken out in all his provinces. He had been obliged to detach his lieutenant, Salvidienus, with six legions to march towards Spain, but these had found the passes of the Alps blocked against them by Asinius Pollio. And at this juncture Lucius, the Consul, was marshalling his forces, bent on provoking another civil war.

The events of the next few months, which culminated in the siege and surrender of Perusia, form one of the most obscure passages in the period with which we are dealing. We know little of the character of Lucius Antonius and of the real motives which induced him to measure his strength against that of Octavian. Appian, indeed, tells us that he was a Republican at heart, and was ill affected towards the Triumvirate, which, as he saw, was not

likely to come to an end when its appointed term of five years ran out. As Consul he had raised six legions of infantry, and counted upon obtaining recruits in plenty from the dispossessed Italians. Yet the fact that he was working hand in glove with Fulvia and Manius warrants the suspicion that his protestations of regard for the Republic were only a blind. The truth was, that while Fulvia was anxious at any cost to rescue her husband from the clutches of Cleopatra, Lucius and Manius saw that Marcus Antonius was steadily losing his pre-eminence in the Triumvirate by lingering in the luxurious repose of the Egyptian capital. They tried, therefore, to force his hand and compel his return before Octavian should succeed in undermining his influence with the Antonian veterans in Italy. Octavian declared that he had no such object in view; that he was on the best of terms with his absent colleague, and that the aim of Lucius was to destroy the Triumvirate. The veterans, who were the real masters of the situation, sought to take the matter into their own hands. Consequently, a number of Octavian and Antonian officers met in consultation and drew up the terms of a compromise, which they endeavored to impose upon the rival leaders. They insisted that the troops of both should share equally in the division of any spoils which remained to be distributed; that two of Antonius's legions should serve with Octavian in the campaign against Sextus; that Salvidienus should be allowed a free passage across the Alps, and that Lucius should dismiss his body-guard and administer his office fearlessly. The

compromise was well meant, but entirely ineffectual. Lucius retired to Præneste, where Fulvia, raging with jealousy and hate, worked her hardest to kindle the flame of war. Then the armies made a last attempt to bring about an understanding, and a conference was arranged to take place at Gabii, midway between Rome and Præneste. But a chance encounter ensued between some scouts of Lucius and a party of horsemen belonging to Octavian, and Lucius, fearing treachery, broke off negotiations. War was immediately declared.

The rebellion assumed the most alarming dimensions. Octavian had only four legions under arms in Italy. One of these he promptly despatched to Brundisium to garrison the port in case Marcus Antonius should appear on the scene, and to strengthen it against the attacks of Domitius Ahenobarbus, who was again patrolling the Adriatic with seventy ships. He hurriedly recalled Salvidienus and his six legions from their march towards Spain, and, leaving Lepidus in command of Rome with two legions, set himself once more to collect reinforcements from his faithful veterans. His adversaries, however, threatened him from all sides. Sextus, with his fleet, ravaged the coast, though he did not attempt a serious landing; Lucius had the active sympathies of the Italian population and what remained of the Optimates in Rome; and the chief supporters of Marcus Antonius, Pollio, Ventidius, and Plancus, moved down from the north, with their respective contingents, at the heels of Salvidienus. The campaign opened with a success for

the Antonian faction. Lucius suddenly appeared before Rome, and three of his cohorts entered the city clandestinely by night. Lepidus fled to the camp of Octavian, and Lucius became, for the moment, master of the capital. Summoning the people together, he delivered a harangue, in which he declared that he would punish Octavian and Lepidus for their lawless rule, and promised that his brother Marcus would resign his position in the Triumvirate, accept the consulship, and restore the old constitution. The people saluted him "imperator" on the spot, and, says Appian, immediately leaped to the conclusion that the unpopular government of the Triumvirs was at an end. But the able strategy of Agrippa, Octavian's right-hand man, speedily checkmated them. The forces of both sides were split up into scattered detachments, seeking to effect a junction. Salvidienus was marching south from Gaul to join Octavian, closely followed by the Antonians, and Lucius threw himself across his path to prevent his further progress. Agrippa thereupon seized Sutrium on the Cassian Way, in the rear of Lucius, and compelled him to draw aside. Agrippa and Salvidienus united their forces, while Lucius moved off to join Pollio and Ventidius. But the Antonian generals either marched too slowly or were too far distant, and Lucius retired to Perusia, near Lake Thrasimene, which he strongly fortified against attack. In the meantime, Octavian pushed north, and succeeded in barring the further advance of Lucius's reinforcements. Pollio was driven to take refuge



COIN OF CLEOPATRA.



COIN OF M. ANTONIUS AND OCTAVIA.



COIN OF M. ANTONIUS, OCTAVIA, AND OCTAVIUS.



COIN OF SEXTUS POMPEIUS.

in Ravenna, Ventidius in Ariminium, and Plancus, who had destroyed one of Octavian's legions on the march, was brought to a standstill at Spoletium in Umbria. Octavian stationed containing forces in front of each of these three towns, and then returned with his main army to Perusia, where he closely invested the imprisoned garrison.

The siege lasted for some weeks. Lucius made desperate efforts to cut his way out, but was beaten back every time, and a half-hearted attempt on the part of Ventidius and Plancus to press through to his relief was checked by Agrippa and Salvidienus. Famine then began to make itself felt in Perusia, and Lucius came to the barbarous resolution of starving all the slaves within the town. They were not allowed to leave lest the enemy should learn the desperate straits to which he was reduced, and the miserable creatures, after a vain endeavour to prolong their wretched existence by eating grass and green leaves, perished in hundreds in the streets. At length, after making a final unsuccessful sortie, Lucius resolved upon surrender, and sent envoys to Octavian to ask for terms. Octavian replied that he would grant an amnesty to the veterans of his colleague, Marcus Antonius, but that all the rest must surrender at discretion. Lucius then boldly undertook to go in person as envoy to the victor's camp, where he was received with every mark of consideration. An unconditional surrender was agreed upon, but Octavian gave a free pardon to every soldier in the garrison, and enrolled them all in his own legions. The city, which

he had intended to turn over to his troops for plunder, was set on fire by one of its citizens and burnt to the ground.

At a later time a story was current that, though Octavian spared Lucius and his troops, he caused three hundred of the leading men of Perusia to be slaughtered as a sacrifice to the shade of Julius, upon an altar erected for the purpose, on the anniversary of Cæsar's murder. But Suetonius and Dion Cassius, while repeating the tale, are careful to refrain from vouching for its accuracy. Modern historians have been practically unanimous in rejecting it. The idea of human sacrifice was repugnant to the Roman mind, and it is impossible to believe that Octavian would have given his sanction to so senseless an act. He had never hesitated to remove enemies from his path when it had suited his policy; he had consented to the proscription; and he had shewn himself more implacable than Antonius in dealing with the prisoners who fell into his hands at Philippi. But the wanton murder of three hundred dignitaries of a provincial town would have been a blundering piece of ferocity which, so far from benefiting him, must have aroused against him a feeling of universal odium. Probably the story grew out of the fact that Octavian did put to death certain of his personal enemies, whom he found in Perusia. Appian tells us the names of three, and adds that there were several others. And if their execution happened to take place, either by accident or design, on the Ides of March, the malignity of his enemies would nat-

urally invent the detail that they were sacrificed at an altar, and would exaggerate the number of the slain.

With the surrender of Perusia the rebellion immediately collapsed, although the Antonian generals still commanded between them no fewer than thirteen legions and six thousand horse. Pollio allowed himself to be superseded in Cisalpine Gaul and took refuge with Domitius Ahenobarbus. Plancus abandoned his army and fled with Fulvia to Greece. Tiberius Claudius Nero, who had been the prime mover of the rising in Campania, joined Sextus Pompeius in Sicily, taking with him his wife, Livia, and his infant son, Tiberius. Asinius Pollio and Ventidius kept a few troops together and collected stores on the Adriatic coast in readiness for Antonius's return, but they were left unmolested by Octavian and Agrippa, who hurried north to Gaul to secure the six Antonian legions stationed there under the command of Calenus. The latter died before Octavian arrived, but his son, Fufius, handed them over without even a shew of resistance. Substituting lieutenants whom he could trust for the Antonians who officered these legions, Octavian returned to Rome, and prepared for the war which Antonius was now threatening.

Antonius did not thank his friends for the way in which they had championed his interests. He seems to have given his supporters no hint of his intentions, and his lieutenants in Italy did not know what their chief desired. When his veterans sent delegates to him in Egypt, urging his immediate return,

he detained them in Alexandria and vouchsafed no definite answer. Hence the otherwise inexplicable hesitation which marked the strategy of Ventidius, Pollio, and Plancus throughout the Perusian campaign, and hence, too, the absolute inactivity of Calenus in Gaul. It may be that Antonius considered his friends strong enough to crush Octavian without his help, and that he hoped to enjoy the profits of their exertions without sharing them himself. But it is even more probable that he was content to let matters drift. He did not desire a rupture with Octavian, or, at least, he did not want it then. Infatuated with Cleopatra, abandoning himself to the pleasures and excesses of the moment, he tarried slothfully in Egypt throughout the whole summer and winter and made no sign. His friends had stumbled into the quicksands; he left them to extricate themselves as best they could. Nor was it until the spring of the following year that he roused himself to fight for the position which was steadily slipping away from his grasp. He had gathered an army to repel an invasion of the Parthians into Syria, and had concentrated his forces at Tyre, when he decided that the moment had come to match his strength against that of Octavian. Leaving Ventidius — who had by this time rejoined him — to deal with the Parthians, he sailed with two hundred ships, furnished by Rhodes and Cyprus, to Athens, where he met Fulvia and Plancus, and prepared to invade Italy. Thus Octavian had again to confront a powerful alliance, for Antonius had come to terms with Domitius Ahenobarbus and Sextus Pompeius,

the latter of whom promised to invade southern Italy. We do not know what communications passed between the two Triumvirs who now seemed bent upon fighting out their quarrel. Octavian, down to the outbreak of the Perusian War, had repeatedly declared that he was only carrying out the policy to which Antonius had given his sanction, and that there was a perfect understanding between them. But when Lucius and Fulvia appealed to arms a rupture was inevitable, and when Octavian crushed the Antonian faction he took care to transfer as many of the Antonian legions as he could to his own standard. His march north to Gaul — which was Antonius's own province — and his dismissal of the Antonian officers from the legions of Calenus amounted to an open declaration of war, which Antonius could not overlook unless he was prepared to surrender his place in the Triumvirate. Antonius, therefore, landed part of his army near Brundisium and laid siege to the garrison, while Sextus Pompeius appeared before Thurii and Consentia.

But though the Triumvirs were hastening to settle their differences by the sword, their soldiers shrank from the conflict. The veteran legions of the rival commanders, old comrades-in-arms in the wars of Julius and the campaign of Philippi, insisted that their generals should come to terms. They found the requisite intermediary in the person of Cocceius Nerva, a mutual friend of both Octavian and Antonius; and an armistice was arranged pending the conclusion of a definite treaty. Antonius ordered Sextus Pompeius to quit Italy and retire to Sicily, and dismissed

Domitius Ahenobarbus with the governorship of Bithynia; while the army of Octavian appointed a committee of officers to negotiate a peace. Cocceius was added to their number as one acceptable to both sides; Pollio was given a place in their councils as the representative of Antonius, and Mæcenas as the representative of Octavian. They agreed that there should be amnesty for the past and friendship for the future, and, as the implacable Fulvia had just died at Sicyon and Octavian's sister had recently lost her husband, Marcellus, they determined that Antonius should marry Octavia and thus strengthen the ties of alliance. The rivals accepted with a good grace the terms thus imposed upon them by their troops, and their plenipotentiaries drew up the Treaty of Brundisium, whereby a fresh partition of the whole Roman world was made. It was now decided that the boundary line should be fixed at Scodra (the modern Scutari) in Illyria, that all provinces and islands east of that line should belong to Antonius and that all to the west should acknowledge the supremacy and be under the administration of Octavian. Lepidus, who at the conclusion of the Perusian war had been sent by Octavian to Africa with six untrustworthy legions, was again given no voice in this redistribution of power, but was allowed to retain the provinces assigned to him by Octavian. It was further agreed that both Octavian and Antonius should raise recruits in Italy in equal numbers, that Octavian should prosecute the war against Sextus Pompeius, unless they came to some arrangement, and that Antonius should resume his campaign

against the Parthians. Such were the terms of the instrument known as the Treaty of Brundisium. As a further proof of good will, Antonius put to death his procurator Manius, who had served his master with too indiscreet a zeal, and disclosed to his colleague the meditated treachery of his lieutenant, Salvidienus, who had purposed to desert to Antonius with the legions under his command. The two masters of the State then repaired to Rome, where they celebrated with unusual pomp the ill-starred union of Octavia with Antonius.

They had still, however, to deal with Sextus Pompeius, who, to revenge himself for the ignominious manner in which Antonius had broken off relations with him, now blockaded the whole western coast of Italy and reduced Rome to a state of famine. Antonius pressed upon his colleague the advisability of peace, but Octavian, exasperated by the loss of Sardinia, which Menodorus, the chief admiral of Pompeius, had again recaptured, refused to treat. He insisted upon war, and, to raise the funds requisite for the building of a fleet, an edict was published levying a poll tax upon all owners of slaves as well as a new legacy duty. A tumult followed in Rome, during which Octavian was stoned in endeavouring to address the people, but his soldiers easily quelled the rising. Yet the famine grew so serious that an accommodation with Sextus became a matter of urgent necessity. Octavian was obliged to yield. He had, in the previous year, divorced Clodia, the daughter of Fulvia, and married Scribonia, the sister of Libo, father-in-law of Sextus Pompeius, and

it was through Libo that negotiations were now opened. Sextus's relatives in Rome, acting on the suggestion of the Triumvirs, wrote offering him a safe-conduct, and his mother, Mucia, was also induced to intercede with her son. Eventually Sextus agreed to meet his rivals, and a conference was held at Misenum. Two platforms were erected on piles at some little distance from the shore. Octavian and Antonius occupied the one, Sextus and Libo the other, and negotiations were carried on across the water which flowed between. Sextus, at the first meeting, boldly demanded a place in the Triumvirate in the room of Lepidus and abruptly cut short the interview when this was refused him. The famine was so severe and Octavian and Antonius were so much at the mercy of the man who held the command of the sea that they were compelled to offer generous terms. In the end the three principals renewed their conference upon the mole of Puteoli and there composed their differences. They agreed that war should immediately cease, that the blockade of Italy should be raised, and that Sextus should send to Rome the grain which had previously been exacted as tribute from the islands of which he now was master. He also undertook to clear the sea of pirates and no longer afford a refuge to fugitive slaves. In return for these concessions Octavian and Antonius promised to acknowledge the dominion of Sextus over Sicily, Corsica, and Sardinia, to concede Achaia and pay an indemnity of fifteen million drachmæ, to admit his soldiers to a share of all gratuities out of the public

funds, to allow him to canvass for the consulship in his absence, and to grant full amnesty to all exiles, except those who had been formally condemned to death for participation in the murder of Julius. The signing of the treaty was celebrated by a banquet on board the magnificent flagship of Sextus, during the course of which the treacherous Menas suggested to his chief that he should slip his moorings and carry off his rivals. "Would that Menas had done this without my knowledge!" was the characteristic reply. "False swearing may become a Menas but not a Pompeius." At the banquet the infant son of Octavia by her first husband, Marcellus, was betrothed to the daughter of Sextus, and Octavian and Antonius repaired to Rome while Sextus returned to Sicily. Throughout their journey to the capital and in Rome itself the Triumvirs were greeted with rapturous enthusiasm. The whole peninsula rejoiced at the prospect of peace, and at its happy deliverance from intestine war. The people thought that at last they had reached the end of their troubles and would now be delivered from the conscription of their sons, from the arrogance of the soldiery, from the defection of their slaves, the pillage of their fields, the ruin of agriculture, and above all from the famine caused by the blockade of the Italian ports. Once more a cruel disillusionment awaited them. It was speedily found that the Treaty of Misenum was not worth the paper on which it had been written.

Octavian and Antonius passed a few weeks in Rome in outward amity. They created new Senators almost daily from the ranks of their own

partisans, and sent written orders to the people, when they met in their comitia, instructing them how to vote. And so completely were they masters of Rome that when Antonius quitted the city he carried with him a *senatus consultum*, ratifying beforehand all the acts which he might commit until his return. Armed with this authority, he despatched his lieutenants throughout the East to rule in his name and interest, and then spent the winter at Athens in the company of Octavia, attending the festivals of the Greeks and listening to the lectures of the philosophers. He exchanged his military cloak for the square-cut pallium and Attic shoe, and led the life of a private citizen with a taste for philosophy and culture — a startling contrast from the Antonius who a twelvemonth before had been rioting in the debauchery of the court of Cleopatra. Then, in the following spring, he pushed forward his preparations for the Parthian war. Meanwhile, Octavian had visited the Gallic provinces and, on coming back to Rome, had found that trouble was once more brewing with Sextus Pompeius. The stipulations of the Treaty of Misenum had not been honourably kept on either side. Sextus complained that Achaia had not been handed over to him, and let loose his roving ruffians to infest the seas. The corn-ships again failed to arrive; Rome was threatened with another famine. Octavian had only consented to the Treaty of Misenum under the pressure of necessity, and had doubtless intended to take the earliest opportunity of crushing this formidable rival who lay upon his flank. He began to intrigue with

Menas, the Pompeian admiral, who was now governor of Corsica and Sardinia, brought down his warships from Ravenna, and collected an army at Brundisium and Puteoli. He also requested Antonius to come to his aid. But Antonius disapproved of the war. It mattered nothing to him that Sextus was a thorn in the side of Octavian — Sextus did not menace his half of the Roman world. Consequently, he wrote to his colleague, advising him not to violate the treaty, and threatened Menas with punishment as his own fugitive slave. But this discouragement did not deter Octavian from his purpose. Menas deserted to his standard, bringing with him three legions and a powerful squadron, and handed over Sardinia and Corsica to one of Octavian's lieutenants. Octavian welcomed him with great cordiality, and left him in command of the ships he had brought with him, subject only to the general control of his admiral, Calvisius. Collecting his fleet into two squadrons, he himself sailed for Sicily from Tarentum, while Calvisius and Menas sailed from the ports of Etruria. Sextus awaited in person the attack of Octavian at Messana, and sent Menecrates to confront Calvisius and Menas. The squadrons of the latter met near Cumæ, and a stubborn engagement ensued, in which the Pompeian fleet gained a signal victory. But its admiral, Menecrates, was slain, and the second in command, instead of pressing home his advantage, sailed back to Sicily. Octavian, who had been waiting for Calvisius to join him before attacking Sextus, advanced immediately through the straits when he heard of the

disaster at Cumæ. Sextus darted out of the harbour at Messana to take him in rear, and forced a general action, compelling the Octavians to take up a position along the coast, where they were repeatedly charged by the enemy, and many of their vessels driven ashore. It was a day of disaster for Octavian, and on the morrow a storm completed the havoc; but with his usual supineness, Sextus failed to follow up the blow. Well satisfied with having driven off his antagonist, he returned to Syracuse in triumph, where he proclaimed himself the favourite son of Neptune, bedecked himself in a mantle of sea-green, and again waited for his enemy.

Octavian's double defeat had reduced his squadrons to a miserable plight. Less than half his ships had survived, and most of these were badly damaged. Yet, thanks to the incapacity of Sextus, he was enabled to convoy his crippled vessels in safety to the port of Vibo. As ever, he rose superior to the adversity which threatened to overwhelm him. The people, hard pressed by famine, refused to pay their taxes, and clamoured for peace with the ruler of the sea. Octavian withstood their entreaties, and clung stoutly to his policy. He sent his trusty counsellor, Mæcenas, to Antonius, to persuade him to lend him the ships of which he stood in need, resolved that if the mission failed, he would embark his legions upon transports and carry the war across into Sicily. But he was saved from the necessity of this dangerous expedient by the return of Mæcenas, who had induced Antonius to promise his aid, and by the welcome news that his able lieutenant, Agrippa, had gained

a splendid victory in Aquitania over the Iberians, quelled the disturbances in that turbulent region, and was ready to come south with his army. Octavian rewarded Agrippa with the consulship for the following year, and employed his brilliant talents in a direction which shewed that he had at last grasped the truth that sea-power can only be overcome by sea-power. "The elephant cannot fight the whale." To conquer Sextus he needed not legions, but ships. He set himself, therefore, to build a navy and construct a powerful naval arsenal. The genius of Agrippa speedily evolved a scheme. He saw that the first thing needful was a convenient base from which a bold offensive might be taken against Sicily. His choice fell upon one of the recesses of the Bay of Naples, where lay two land-locked pools between Puteoli and the promontory of Misenum. The Lucrine Lake, as one of these was called, was only separated from the sea by a narrow belt of shingle, while Lake Avernus was a mile inland. Agrippa connected the two sheets of water with a canal, built a wall of solid masonry to protect the outer side of the Lucrine Lake, and dug a narrow channel to give access to the sea. A powerful mole and breakwater completed the work, to which was given the name of the Julian Haven, and within this sheltered position Octavian was able to build the ships of which he stood in need, practise his crews, and lay the firm foundations of naval power.

In the spring of 37 Antonius had set sail from Athens with 300 ships in fulfilment of his promise of assistance, but by this time Octavian had resolved

not to try conclusions with Sextus until his own fleet was ready. Instead of welcoming Antonius, therefore, he made continued excuses for delay, and the relations between them became strained. Antonius found the expense of maintaining so many war vessels exceedingly burdensome, but, as he needed soldiers and was anxious to barter some of his ships for a part of Octavian's army, he sent his wife, Octavia, to Rome to use her influence with her brother. A meeting was arranged near Tarentum, at which the rival leaders once more temporarily composed their differences, and they parted — after renewing the Triumvirate for another term of five years — never to meet again until they encountered one another in desperate conflict off the coast of Actium. Antonius gave his colleague 120 ships in exchange for 20,000 Italian legionaries for the Parthian war. Octavia presented her brother with ten *phaseli* with triple banks of oars, which she had begged as a favour from her husband, and Octavian, not to be outdone in generosity, gave her in return a body-guard of 1000 picked troops to be selected by Antonius.

CHAPTER VII

LAST CAMPAIGN AGAINST SEXTUS AND DEPOSITION OF LEPIDUS

36 B.C.

NOT until the midsummer of B.C. 36 were Octavian's naval preparations complete. Agrippa had been his organiser of victory; to him was now entrusted the duty of directing the powerful fighting machine which he had put together. Octavian had prevailed upon Lepidus to co-operate with him against Sextus and he had drawn up his plan of campaign on lines which promised complete success. His naval forces were divided into three sections. Lepidus, sailing from Africa, was to strike at the western corner of Sicily; Statilius Taurus, with the squadron which Antonius had given him, was to sail from Tarentum and effect a landing on the eastern coast; while Octavian and Agrippa, with the main fleet, were to sail from the Julian Haven and gain a foothold in the north-eastern corner. The first of July was chosen as an auspicious day for weighing anchor and it was hoped that the three divisions would reach their objectives simultaneously.

The dispositions of Sextus show that he was fully aware of the points at which danger was threatened. He stationed Plennius at Lilybæum with one legion and a strong force of light-armed troops to oppose the landing of Lepidus; he held the Liparic Islands in force to prevent their being seized by Agrippa, and he posted his main fleet at Messana in the straits, in readiness to move either against Agrippa or Taurus as opportunity afforded. The son of Neptune, as Sextus delighted to call himself, enjoyed his customary good fortune. Two days after the Octavian fleets had quitted harbour a violent storm got up from the south. Taurus immediately put back into Tarentum and placed his squadron out of action, while the rear-guard of the main fleet, under Appius, was caught while doubling the promontory of Minerva and sadly crippled. Octavian had taken refuge in the Bay of Velia, in Lucania, but the gale shifted from the south to the south-west and, as it blew straight into the bay, his vessels could find no shelter and many of them were driven upon the rocks. He lost six of his heavy war-ships, twenty-six of his lighter vessels, and a still larger number of Liburnian galleys, and, since even the ships which escaped total destruction were crippled and needed repair, the expedition was brought to a sudden standstill. Lepidus alone reached his appointed destination. He, too, lost several of his store ships, but effected a landing near Lilybæum with twelve legions and blockaded Plennius.

Octavian was not disheartened even by this unlooked-for disaster. Owing to the lateness of the



MAP
TO ILLUSTRATE
THE CAMPAIGNS AGAINST
SEXTUS POMPEIUS

season he would have preferred to postpone the expedition until the spring, but public opinion was in too excited and nervous a state to admit of delay. Sending Mæcenas to Rome to allay the apprehensions and clamours of the people, he himself crossed over to Tarentum to inspect the fleet of Taurus and give him fresh instructions, and then hurried on the repair of his ships in the harbour of Vibo. Sextus, as usual, threw away his golden opportunities. Pluming himself upon the signal protection vouchsafed to him by Neptune and Providence in the destruction of his enemy's fleet by a gale during the summer months, he permitted Octavian to refit his flotilla in peace when he should have assumed the offensive. He merely sent Menas—who had again joined him—to reconnoitre Octavian's dockyards, and Menas, after cleverly cutting out a number of Octavian's ships to shew what might be accomplished by a daring raider, once more changed sides. When at length operations were resumed the war proceeded with varying fortune. Two legions on their way in merchant ships from Africa to reinforce Lepidus were destroyed by Papias, one of Sextus's captains. Octavian and Agrippa manœuvred in order to obtain a landing in the north-eastern corner of Sicily. They seized Strongyle, one of the five Æolian Islands, as a convenient base, and then, seeing that Sextus had posted large forces on the Sicilian shore at Pelorus, Mylæ, and Tyndaris, Octavian left Agrippa in command and, returning to Vibo, hastened with Messala and his three legions to the camp of Taurus, near Rhegium, with the idea of crossing the channel and

seizing Tauromenium by a sudden coup. During his absence Agrippa forced a naval engagement with the fleet of Sextus, which he defeated with a loss of thirty ships, and then sailed to attack the town of Tyndaris. He believed that the Pompeian fleet was still at anchor off Mylæ, and Octavian, on hearing of Agrippa's victory, promptly sailed for Tauromenium, expecting that little or no opposition would be offered him. But Sextus had divined Octavian's intentions. On the evening of his engagement with Agrippa he had slipped away unobserved to Messana with most of his ships, leaving only a few vessels at Mylæ to delude Agrippa into the belief that the main fleet still lay in that harbour. No sooner, therefore, had Octavian landed at Tauromenium than Sextus made his appearance down the straits with a large squadron and at the same time his cavalry and infantry were fast approaching. The cavalry came up before Octavian's troops had time to entrench their camp, and wrought considerable execution, and a simultaneous attack by the fleet and the infantry would probably have resulted in his entire destruction. His men, however, completed their camp during the night and, on the following morning, Octavian placed all the infantry in charge of Cornificius and himself went on shipboard to do battle with the enemy.

The fight lasted the whole day and resulted in a decisive victory for Sextus. Most of Octavian's ships were sunk or captured, and though he managed to reach the Italian coast in safety, only a single armour bearer was left to escort the Triumvir to

the sheltering camp of Messala. Thence he sent word to Agrippa apprising him of the disaster and begging him to send what aid he could to Cornificius. The latter, completely isolated and with no store of provisions, boldly decided to march across the mountains, and, after a terrible journey, during which his men were harassed by the enemy and tortured by the heat and want of water, he fell in with Laronius and the three legions which Agrippa had despatched to his assistance. But the blow which Octavian had received was too serious to be kept secret and again he was obliged to send Mæcenas to Rome to put down the revolutionists who were causing disorder. Happily, however, for himself, he found in Messala — one of the proscribed whose death-warrant he had himself signed — a most loyal lieutenant, and contrived to transport his army from the mainland to the port of Tyndaris, which Agrippa had succeeded in capturing. There he assembled an army of 20,000 legionaries and 5000 light-armed troops, while the main fleet lay at anchor in the bay. Sextus held the defiles which led to the north-eastern corner of the island and the coast towns, but soon afterwards abandoned Mylæ and concentrated his forces at Pelorus and Messana. Meanwhile Lepidus, after slowly traversing the island from Lilybæum, was now within touch of his colleague, and the fleet of Taurus was busy ravaging the coast towns upon which Sextus depended for his supplies. Despairing of success against the overwhelming land forces of Octavian and Lepidus fast converging upon him, Sextus determined to

stake everything upon a final naval engagement. Three hundred ships of war were engaged on either side and the battle in the Bay of Naulochus was fiercely contested. Agrippa had provided each of his captains with a powerful grappling-iron, called the *harpago*, a stout iron-shod beam, five cubits long, with an iron claw attached to the end. This was thrown by a catapult upon the enemy's deck and machine power drew the two ships together as soon as the claw had obtained a firm grip. The ordinary naval tactics of the time were rendered useless by this device and the two squadrons closed and fought in one confused mass. Victory at length inclined to the Octavians and only seventeen ships of the Pompeian fleet managed to escape to Messana. Seeing that the day was lost, Sextus fled without waiting to give orders to his infantry and the whole Pompeian land force at Naulochus surrendered without striking a blow. Then, hurriedly placing his most portable treasures upon shipboard at Messana, Sextus fled away to Lesbos in the hope of extorting from Antonius a share in the sovereignty of the East. After some brief successes in Bithynia he was made prisoner and put to death at Miletus in his fortieth year. He can hardly be said — despite the name he bore — to have been the head of a political faction, though he naturally rallied to his standard all those who were driven to fly from the vengeance of the conquering Triumvirs. Sextus was little better than a freebooter, a corsair chief, whose hand was against every man. Cicero and the Republican leaders after the murder of Julius had

shunned him as one who had ceased to be a true Roman. He had been the associate and patron of pirates in Cilicia; he had lived as a guerilla leader in Spain. His admirals were ex-slaves and freedmen whose services his proud and exclusive father would have disdained to employ. And the amazing success which attended him for so many years was due not so much to his military capacity as to his perception of the overwhelming importance to be attached to the command of the sea. Italy could be starved. Sextus recognised this obvious truth and acted upon it. While the other aspirants for power were quarrelling among themselves and collecting legions, he gathered ships and gained the undisputed control of the Western Mediterranean. If he had possessed any real strategical ability he might have won for himself a place in the Triumvirate. Time and again fortune favoured the superior skill of his sailors; repeatedly the shattered fleets of Octavian lay at his mercy. But he never once rose to the full height of his opportunities; he always awaited attack; and the persistency of Octavian and Agrippa was bound to win in the long run.

With the ignominous flight of Sextus from Messana the success of Octavian's Sicilian campaign was assured. Yet before it closed it was destined to take yet another entirely unexpected turn. Soon after Sextus quitted the island, his lieutenant, Plennius, entered Messana unopposed with eight legions. The reduction of this strongly fortified town was assigned to Agrippa and Lepidus jointly, while Octavian remained in camp at Naulochus. Plennius

was in no mood to fight to the death for a chief who had forsaken him and he intrigued with Lepidus, to whom he agreed to surrender the city on the understanding that his soldiers should have an equal share with those of Lepidus in the plunder it afforded. Agrippa protested, but in vain. The soldiers of Lepidus were admitted into the city and Plennius and his troops immediately ranged themselves under Lepidus's standard. This new accession of strength seems to have turned the brain of the Triumvir. He boldly claimed Sicily as his own prize. He had been despoiled, he said, of the provinces which had previously been allotted to him and was now determined to hold what he had won. Octavian, hastening up from Naulochus to meet this unforeseen danger, had a stormy interview with his colleague and they parted in hot anger and prepared for battle. But once more the legions refused to adopt their masters' quarrels. They were sick of civil war, and intrigue took the place of fighting. Octavian's emissaries were busy in the camp of Lepidus, where they found no enthusiasm for so indolent and incapable a commander, and Octavian resolved upon the daring expedient of riding up with a body of horsemen, which he left at the entrance, while he entered the camp almost alone. His boldness nearly cost him his life. Lepidus called to arms and Octavian in the confusion was struck with a javelin upon the breastplate. But though he was driven from the camp, detachment after detachment of the Lepidan army transferred their standards to his side, and eventually Lepidus was left absolutely alone. Throwing

off his military garb, he approached the victor to beg for mercy, and found Octavian in a generous mood after so bloodless a victory. His life was spared; and though the African command was taken from him, Octavian permitted him to retain the chief priesthood.

Such was the ignominious end of Lepidus's insane ambition. According to Suetonius, he was first confined to a residence at Circeii and then, says Dion Cassius, was recalled to Rome in order that his humilation might be the more conspicuous. His character need not detain us. Julius had appointed him Master of the Horse during his first dictatorship, and Julius, as a rule, shewed a shrewd knowledge of men. But whatever promise Lepidus may have displayed in his earlier career was falsified in his later years. He owed the position he attained to his high rank, to his great wealth, and to the timely aid which, on more than one occasion, he had lent to Antonius at critical moments in the latter's career. But he had neither energy nor ability enough to retain his place in the Triumvirate, and when his patron removed to the East his fall was certain. The rash challenge which he flung down to Octavian was the act of a madman and precipitated his unlamented ruin.

Octavian was now the undisputed head of an enormous army and a powerful and victorious fleet. Forty-five legions of infantry, 25,000 horsemen, and 40,000 light-armed troops acknowledged him as their general and 600 war-ships sailed under his flag. Africa and Sicily were added to his command, and

from the latter alone he wrung a tribute of 1600 talents. But though there was no enemy in open arms against him he still had to reckon with the turbulent and disaffected temper of his troops. Some of the legions broke into open mutiny, demanding their discharge and rewards equal to those given to the men who had fought at Philippi. Finding that the troops could not be browbeaten into obedience he had recourse to conciliation, and by dexterously discharging and sending away from Sicily the most insubordinate, by distributing 500 drachmæ per man to the remainder, and holding out promises of more, he quelled the mutiny and returned to Rome triumphant. There is no reason to doubt the sincerity of the welcome which was accorded to Octavian alike by the Senate and by the people of Rome. The defeat and flight of Sextus Pompeius had relieved them of all apprehension of famine. Corn had stood at famine prices throughout the years that Sextus had been master of Sicily, and the ill-success which had attended Octavian's previous campaigns had created wide-spread depression and disaffection. The whole of the Italian peninsula was exhausted with the long wars through which it had passed, with the pillage it had suffered from the legions which had marched and countermarched incessantly throughout its length and breadth, and from the bands of runaway slaves who had taken advantage of the paralysis of the administrative machine to quit their masters and live by indiscriminate plunder. The one passionate desire of Italy and Rome was for peace and quiet, for an

opportunity to recuperate, for a breathing space during which they might once more be free from war's alarms. There was only one man in the West who could give them what they wanted. That man was Octavian, and though he was their master — and Rome never loved its masters — he could at least guarantee them security. The youthful conqueror — he was still but twenty-seven years of age — approached the capital with words of conciliation upon his lips. Summoning the people to assemble outside the *pomœrium*,—a concession to the letter of a law which had repeatedly been broken by himself as well as by others,— he promised them peace and clemency. He declared that the civil wars were over; that there was no longer any necessity for bloodshed, and that the Triumvirate, which the people detested so heartily, should come to an end as soon as his colleague Antonius had brought his Parthian campaigns to a conclusion and they might both, with safety to themselves, lay down their extraordinary powers. To mark the happy occasion, he remitted outstanding arrears of debt to the Treasury and abolished several taxes, restored to the urban magistrates the free exercise of their old powers, and ostentatiously burnt in public a number of important letters, which he had seized in Sicily, containing proof of the guilty correspondence which some of the leading men in Rome had maintained with Sextus Pompeius. The people accepted his pledges and promises with enthusiasm. They voted him a public residence on the Palatine and proposed to take away the chief priesthood from the now

friendless and humiliated Lepidus and confer it upon his conqueror. Octavian refused. He remained content with an ovation for his Sicilian victories and with the erection of a marble column in the Forum, surmounted with a golden image of himself which bore the inscription, "Peace, long disturbed, be re-established on land and sea." Nor were these honours the less merited because they were paid not to the champion but to the subverter of the Roman Republic.

Octavian now enters upon a new phase of his wonderful career. He had achieved success; it remained for him to prove that he deserved it. The Triumvirate by the degradation of Lepidus had been reduced to a Duumvirate; Lepidus's share had fallen to him and his course lay tolerably clear before him. Sooner or later there must come a rupture with Antonius and a fight to the death for single undisputed supremacy. For that he must prepare cautiously but surely, and this was the object to which he now bent his unremitting energies and his consummate and sagacious statecraft. Five years were to elapse before the rivals decided their quarrel at Actium, and the authorities for this important period of Octavian's life are unhappily meagre and unsatisfactory. Yet the glimpses which are afforded us of the resolute young ruler, girding himself to prepare for the inevitable, enable us fully to understand why he succeeded and why Antonius failed. Octavian saw that the most pressing need of his time was decent government, decent administration, and a decent executive. And these he determined to give to Rome.



RUINS OF THE PALATINE.

FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY ALINARI.

CHAPTER VIII

THE FALL OF ANTONIUS

36–30 B.C.

ANTONIUS had parted from Octavian at Tarentum in the early summer of B.C. 37. Leaving his wife, Octavia, under the care of her brother, he had repaired to Athens, where the most flattering reports of the successes won by his lieutenants continued to reach him. Sosius had already driven the Parthians from Syria; Canidius had carried his standards to the Caucasus, while Ventidius had routed the enemy in Cilicia and slain the Parthian general, Pacorus. When, therefore, Antonius quitted Athens in the spring of the following year to conduct the war in person, he felt that he had little to fear from the ambitions of a colleague who was about to engage in a hazardous campaign against his slippery foe, Sextus Pompeius. But Antonius was his own worst enemy. No sooner had he turned his face towards Syria than his passion for Cleopatra again awakened. He sent forward Fonteius Capito to Alexandria to bid Cleopatra rejoin him at Laodicea. The Egyptian Queen

willingly obeyed the summons, and strengthened her hold upon her Roman admirer, whose infatuation knew no bounds. He publicly acknowledged the twins she had borne him and gave to them the Oriental titles of the Sun and Moon, while he lavished Roman provinces upon his royal mistress, adding to her kingdom of Egypt Phœnicia, Cœle-Syria, Cyprus, parts of Judæa and Arabia, and the whole of Cilicia Trachæa.

Then, in the midsummer of 36, he led an army of 30 legions, 10,000 horse, and 30,000 auxiliaries furnished by his ally, the King of Armenia, to attack Artavasdes, the King of Media Atropatene,—a tributary of the Parthian Monarch,—whose realm was bounded by Armenia on the north, the Caspian on the east, Media on the south, and Mesopotamia on the west. Warned by the disaster which seventeen years before had overwhelmed Crassus, who had chosen to march through the great plains of Mesopotamia, Antonius took the longer but easier route through the south of Armenia and reached in safety the capital of Artavasdes. But he had rashly left behind him the siege-train which was indispensable for the successful assault of a walled city, and the enemy cleverly cut into his lines of communication and destroyed the detachments which he had stationed for their protection. He was compelled to retreat; his ally withdrew his auxiliaries in the hour of peril; and only after a desperate march of twenty-seven days, during which he fought eighteen actions and lost twenty-four thousand men, did Antonius succeed in reaching Artaxata, the capital of his

treacherous ally, on the river Araxes. Even then, instead of wintering in Armenia, he pushed on to Syria at a further cost of eight thousand legionaries and returned with Cleopatra to Alexandria. The expedition had completely failed, and had only been redeemed from irreparable disaster by the masterly skill with which Antonius had conducted the retreat. He did not scruple, however, to send couriers to Rome with lying tidings of victory, and Octavian himself, while taking good care that the real truth should be known, publicly congratulated his colleague upon his reported successes. At the magnificent games which he provided for the Roman people to celebrate his own conquests in Sicily, the chariot of the absent Antonius appeared bedecked with triumphal pomp, and his statue was given a place in the Temple of Concord.

Meanwhile, amid the dissipations of Alexandria, Antonius steadily degenerated. Though still in the prime of manhood, the hard life which he had led during the last twenty years began to tell upon him. Throughout his many campaigns he had amazed his soldiers by the cheerfulness with which he had endured privations. Whatever he asked his men to do he had done himself. They were proud to follow a leader who grumbled neither at extreme heat nor extreme cold, who was content with the rudest and scantiest fare, and spared himself no more than he spared them. During his forced march over the Alps after the battle of Mutina and again during his hazardous retreat towards the Araxes, Antonius had displayed the finest qualities of a great general.

But he passed from excessive privation to excessive luxury, and as often as he came within reach of plenty and pleasure he abandoned himself to the gratification of his sensual appetites. He seemed to lose all self-control and live in a chronic state of debauch. No doubt his faults were much exaggerated by the reckless imagination of the scandal-mongers and by the deliberate malignity of his foes. His character has been drawn for us mainly by unfriendly hands, by Cicero, his arch-enemy, and by the partisans of his victorious rival, Octavian. Yet there is little doubt that their picture is, in the main, correct, and it is easy to believe that during the last five years of his life he degenerated both in body and mind under the baneful influence of the Egyptian Queen. The East—not for the first or the last time in history—ruined the soldier of the West.

Yet he still revolved schemes of conquest, and made spasmodic preparations for war with the kings of Armenia, Media, and Parthia. During the year 35 he accomplished nothing, though he had equipped an army in Syria to punish the treachery of the Armenian in his last campaign. Cleopatra kept him by her side and the troops were not set in motion. This year, however, is important, because it marked the beginning of the final rupture between himself and Octavian. His wife made one more effort to rescue him from the toils which Cleopatra had woven around him. She left Rome to rejoin her husband in Syria, bringing with her a magnificent body-guard of two thousand picked troops as a present for her

lord, in addition to vast stores of clothes and comforts for his legionaries. But, when she reached Athens, she found a letter directing her to come no farther. Antonius refused to see her, yet was base enough to accept her presents. Cleopatra, who feared that her ascendency over Antonius would be imperilled if he saw his wife, triumphed once more. Octavia, therefore, returned to Rome, while Antonius, more infatuated than ever, went back to Egypt with his paramour. The next year (34) he roused himself to make a brilliant dash upon Armenia. City after city surrendered, the King fell a captive into his hands and he returned, after a short campaign, to celebrate a Roman triumph for the first time on the banks of the Nile. Rome heard with indignation of the brilliant scenes which accompanied his entry into Alexandria, of the two golden thrones which had been set upon a silver tribunal, and of the captive King of Armenia, once the ally of the Republic, being led in chains to do obeisance before the Queen of Egypt. The Roman people heard with amazement, and Octavian with bitter anger, that Antonius had acknowledged the legitimacy of the bastard Cæsarion, the child whom Cleopatra had borne to Julius, and had associated him with the Queen herself in the sovereignty of Egypt, Cyprus, and Cœle-Syria. To his own twin sons, Alexander and Ptolemy, the Sun and Moon of the Egyptian firmament, he assigned Roman provinces and the still unconquered thrones of the East, and to his infant daughter the sovereignty of Cyrene. Antonius himself assumed the diadem and the golden

sceptre, masqueraded as the god Osiris, and degraded his legionaries in Roman eyes by compelling them to act as body-guard to the Egyptian Queen and bear her monogram upon their shields. The pride of Cleopatra knew no bounds. We have, it is true, only the authority of her enemies for the ambitions which occupied her mind, but there seems some reason to suppose that she looked confidently forward to returning to Rome—which she had last visited as the mistress of Julius—in the triumph of victory by the side of her consort Antonius. She had suffered insults in the city on the Tiber. The haughty Roman aristocrats had poured scorn on her pride; the bitter-tongued populace had vented upon her their sarcasms as she passed among them in the narrow streets. She now vowed that she would dictate her decrees from the Capitol itself and, as Propertius says, give law to the Roman world amid the statues and trophies of Marius. And so, in the year 33, the schemes of Antonius, under her direction, began to take a new turn. He dreamt of alliance with the Eastern Powers and of leading their armies with his own to the conquest of the West. Once more, therefore, he penetrated to the Araxes, but, instead of fighting with the Median King, he betrothed his son Alexander to a Median princess, gave him a share of the kingdom of Armenia, and, obtaining in return a large contingent of Median cavalry, marshalled his mighty forces on the coast line of Asia Minor, and spent the winter in Samos, with Cleopatra once more at his side. Nor did he make any secret of his intentions. The whole world

knew that its two masters were about to engage in mortal conflict.

During these three years Octavian had been steadily consolidating his strength and winning golden opinions in Rome. He had given Italy peace and security. Even the turbulent provinces of Spain and Gaul had been reduced to tranquillity; the legions had been kept employed not in shedding the blood of their fellow-Romans but in subduing the warlike tribes of Illyria and Dalmatia, and Octavian himself had gained honourable wounds among the fastnesses of the Illyrian Alps. We do not know what communications passed between him and his absent colleague. Probably they were few and formal. But while outwardly they remained good friends and allies, if either sought the excuse for a rupture there was no lack of suitable pretext. The climax was reached at the beginning of the year 32, when, in accordance with the terms of their compact at Tarentum, the consulship was to be held by two nominees of Antonius, Sosius and Domitius. Acting, no doubt, upon instructions from their chief, the two Consuls signalised their entry into office by a violent attack upon Octavian. They denounced him for having despoiled Lepidus of his share in the Triumvirate and for seizing control of his provinces and legions to the detriment of Antonius. They complained that the legions of the East had not received their fair proportion of rewards, and that the war-ships which Antonius had lent to Octavian had never been returned. Octavian, who had been absent from the city when the attack was

delivered, hurried back and convened the Senate. Attending the meeting with an armed escort, and taking his usual place between the Consuls of the year, he replied with a fierce counter-attack and denounced Antonius as unsparingly as he himself had been denounced by Antonius's partisans. And then, when the Consuls declared that their position was no longer safe in Rome, and quitted the city to rejoin their patron, Octavian, so far from hindering their going, publicly announced that all who desired to join Antonius were free to do so.

By this time Antonius and Cleopatra had left their winter retreat at Samos and betaken themselves to Athens, which they made their headquarters, and while Cleopatra courted the fickle favour of the Athenians, Antonius pressed on his military preparations. It was from that city that he sent to his deeply injured wife, Octavia, a bill of divorce. This was the crowning insult which he could offer to the first lady of the Roman world, who had done even more than her duty to her infatuated and unworthy husband. When Antonius had curtly bidden her to return to Rome from Athens and leave him with his paramour, Octavian had desired his sister to quit Antonius's roof and take up her abode with him. But she had refused, and had still continued to care not only for her own children by Antonius, but for the children of Antonius and Fulva. If any clients of her husband visited Rome they found in her house the hospitality they required, and thus, despite the indignities which had been heaped upon her, she maintained a brave front before the world.

Antonius was now brutal enough not merely to send formal notification that he repudiated her, but to despatch agents to Rome to turn her out of his house.

Rome sympathised with and pitied the deeply wronged lady. Her brother Octavian took a speedy revenge. Titius and Plancus, the former one of Antonius's best lieutenants, the latter the notorious traitor who had first proved false to the Republic and to Cicero, and now deserted his patron, Antonius, had changed their camps and thrown themselves upon the protection of Octavian. It was from them he learnt that Antonius had deposited his will—which they themselves had attested—in the custody of the Vestal Virgins. They urged him to secure the document and publish its contents. Octavian listened to their advice, and though the impiety rather than the dishonourable character of the act caused murmurs of disapproval, the contents of the will were made public. It was found that Antonius had left instructions that if he died in Rome his body should be carried in funeral procession through the Forum and then be transported to Alexandria for burial in the tomb of Cleopatra. But what touched Octavian far more closely was the fact that in this testament Antonius acknowledged the lawfulness of the union of Julius and Cleopatra; that he recognised Cæsarion as Julius's legitimate son, and by implication, therefore, declared Octavian to be a usurper of the titles which belonged to another. The will was read before both Senate and people, and two of Antonius's old supporters,

C. Calvisius Sabinus and C. Furnius, affirmed that it was Antonius's intention, if he proved victorious in the struggle, to abandon Rome and make Alexandria the new capital of the world. To what extent these accusations were well founded, or even to what extent the document read before the Senate was genuine, it is impossible to say. Octavian was not above falsifying evidence for use against his foes. Knowing that war was certain and unavoidable, he availed himself of every means whereby to inflame public opinion against his rival. It was his deliberate policy to array upon his side the pride and jealousy of the Roman people, to exaggerate and paint in the darkest colours the influence and ambition of Cleopatra, to represent that the Roman religion and the Roman civilisation were threatened by the alien gods and the alien civilisation of the Nile. Octavian never shewed his astuteness and cunning more convincingly than by his conduct in these critical moments. At last, when he felt the hour had come, the Senate, at his instigation, deprived Antonius of the consulship for the year 31—though Antonius had already designated Lucius Cluvius to hold office for him—and formally annulled his triumviral powers. But Octavian carefully refrained from declaring Antonius a public enemy. The war which he proclaimed in the Temple of Bellona with all the ancient solemn ceremonial was proclaimed against Cleopatra alone, on the pretext that she had usurped sovereign rights over territories which belonged to the Roman Republic.

To obtain the necessary money for the campaign

about to open Octavian imposed a special war tax of twenty-five per cent. upon all holders of land, and mulcted freedmen who possessed a fortune of more than 200,000 sesterces, of an eighth of their total possessions. These taxes were most unpopular and if Antonius had been well advised he would have made a great effort to land an army in Italy during the autumn of 32. But, though this was threatened by his presence at Corcyra, he let the months slip by and withdrew to Patras to spend the winter. He had been kept fully informed of what was passing in Rome, and, on hearing that the Senate had deposed him from the Triumvirate, he sent back a haughty message declaring that he would listen to no negotiations for peace, but that six months after he had decisively crushed his enemies he would lay down his special powers and restore the ancient constitution. At the opening of the new year, 31 B.C., when the term of the Triumvirate had expired, Octavian took possession of the consulship, choosing as his colleague Marcus Valerius Messala. The first few months passed without decisive action. Antonius had collected a huge army of 100,000 foot and 12,000 horse, and he was followed into the field by the kings of Mauretania, Commagene, Cappadocia, and Paphlagonia, vassals who owed to him the thrones on which they sat. In his host, too, were ranged auxiliaries from Pontus, Media, and Armenia, while a powerful squadron from Egypt held an important place in his enormous fleet of 500 ships of war. Octavian's forces were smaller in number but were far more coherent and

trustworthy. He had 80,000 legionaries, 12,000 horsemen, and a fleet of 250 ships of much lighter calibre than those of the enemy, but possessing the inestimable advantage that their officers and crews had been trained in the art of naval warfare during the campaign against Sextus Pompeius. Antonius had ships in abundance but they were inadequately manned. This, however, did not trouble him, for when their unreadiness to put to sea was pointed out to him he carelessly replied: "What does it matter about sailors? As long as there are oars on board and men in Greece we shall not lack for rowers." Yet he soon found it necessary to burn many of his vessels in order to make up full equipments for the remainder.

The offensive was taken by Octavian and Agrippa. The latter, with a true perception of naval strategy, led a powerful squadron to seize Methone in the Peloponnese, and this port he utilised as a base whence his ships might intercept the supplies coming from Egypt and Asia to Antonius, whose chief difficulty was that of finding sustenance for his army and his fleet in the impoverished districts of Greece. Octavian, meanwhile, threw an army across the Adriatic and seized Corcyra, and then gradually concentrated his forces on the coast of Epirus facing the Antonian camp at Actium. The narrow channel which forms the entrance to the Ambracian Gulf alone separated the combatants, and many weeks passed in desultory skirmishing. Antonius at length sent his cavalry round the head of the gulf to attack the Octavian positions in flank.

They were unsuccessful, however, in this enterprise, and one of his naval squadrons, under Nasidicus, was cut off and captured by the active Agrippa. Defections daily took place in the Antonian camp. The kings of Pisidia, Paphlagonia, and Galatia deserted their patron, and, more important still, Domitius Ahenobarbus and his personal friend and adviser, Quintus Dellius, also made terms with Octavian. Antonius, whose fleets were cooped up in the Ambracian Gulf, found his commissariat difficulties almost insuperable. His lieutenants strongly urged him to strike his camp and choose another battle-ground; he himself is said to have sent wild challenges to Octavian to meet him in personal combat or to fight out their quarrel on the historic ground of Pharsalus. Octavian waited, as he could well afford to do, and eventually Antonius resolved to stake all upon the issue of a naval battle. It is said that he was urged thereto by the fears of Cleopatra, whose one anxiety was to get away from the perils of the camp at Actium and return to her own country, while the repeated successes of Agrippa, who held the seas and was, by this time, blockading the entrance to the Ambracian Gulf, increased her alarm for her personal safety.

Antonius has been blamed by some historians for risking a naval action. The probabilities are that he was compelled either to fight or lose his entire fleet. He had allowed the Octavians, with far fewer ships than his own, to obtain the command of the sea. His vessels remained idle in port, while Agrippa's light galleys were intercepting his supply

ships. Yet Antonius's whole plan of campaign depended upon his transports. None knew better than he how arduous it was to maintain a large army in Greece; and that it was incumbent upon him to try conclusions with Octavian's navy. If he proved victorious, the position of Octavian's land forces in Epirus would be desperate, for they were obliged to draw all their supplies across the Adriatic; while, even if he were beaten, he would still be able to withdraw his army across the mainland into Macedonia and Thrace. Antonius, therefore, is not to be censured for deciding to fight on sea; the indelible stain upon his military reputation is that he had secretly determined, if he were worsted in the encounter, to abandon his land army to its fate and share the flight of his paramour. Certainly his soldiers heard with dismay the order that twenty thousand picked legionaries were to be sent on shipboard. "Imperator," exclaimed one of his centurions, a veteran whose body was covered with honourable wounds gained in many a campaign, "why do you mistrust these wounds, or this sword, and rest your hopes upon miserable logs of wood? Let Egyptians and Phœnicians fight on sea, but give us the land, on which we are wont to conquer or die." Their dismay was intensified when they saw that the ships were being laden with treasure, and that, contrary to the usual practice, the sails were being stowed on board instead of being left on shore. It was, therefore, with a gloomy foreboding of defeat that the Antonians challenged the enemy on the 2d of

September, 31, and the two fleets faced one another at last. But scarcely had they manœuvred into position and the battle been joined, when from the galley of Cleopatra there flew the signal of retreat. Crowding on all sail, the Egyptian squadron of sixty ships turned and ran, and Antonius, leaping into a swift galley, hastened to overtake his mistress. When he had boarded her vessel, the shame of his conduct scorched him like a flame. For three whole days he sate at the prow with his head buried in his hands, overcome with ineffectual remorse. At length, when Cape Tænaron was reached, Cleopatra's women led him to their mistress's cabin, and, continuing their flight, her captains shaped their course for the Libyan coast.

Antonius's crews, whom he had thus basely abandoned, fought strenuously until far into the day, when the rumour that their commander had deserted them spread through the fleet and could no longer be denied. Many vessels had been sunk or shattered, the remaining three hundred surrendered. The victory of Octavian was complete, and his triumph was crowned by the surrender of the land army of Antonius without striking a blow. For seven days the Antonian legions turned a deaf ear to the agents of Octavian, but when their general, Canidius, also fled, they hesitated no longer and passed over to the camp of Octavian. The conqueror could now afford to be generous to the partisans of a rival who was not only beaten but disgraced. A few of his captives, against whom he bore a special grudge, were put to death, but he

spared the lives of most, and the legionaries of Antonius willingly took the oath of loyalty. To reduce the numbers of the enormous host under his command was his first care. Those who had served their time with the eagles were dismissed and sent back to Italy, which he placed under the care of his friend Agrippa, while, with a picked army, he himself set out to undertake the conquest of Egypt. As before, his soldiers clamoured for their pay, and betrayed a mutinous spirit when the money was not forthcoming. The shores of Actium furnished no booty; the camp of Antonius had been despoiled by Antonius himself. But Octavian quelled the mutiny, and, after laying the foundations of the city of Nicopolis upon the site where he had pitched his camp, he moved slowly through Greece and Asia Minor to receive the submission of the East. Then, deeming it advisable to pay a flying visit to Italy before making his descent upon Egypt, Octavian suddenly appeared at Brundisium, where he received deputations from the capital congratulating him upon his triumph, and offering him the consulship for the year 30. The main reason, however, which had brought him to Italy was to overawe the discontented and disbanded soldiery, who were again clamouring for their rewards, and he partially succeeded in this at the expense of the unfortunate Italians of the south by a wholesale eviction of all who had favoured the cause of Antonius. As after Philippi, a number of Italian cities were handed over to the legionaries, and the original possessors were transplanted to Greece and

Asia. To prove at once his desire and his inability to pay his soldiers, he put up his own estates at auction in order to obtain a supply of ready cash. But no one was reckless enough to make a bid for such dangerous property, and the soldiers had perforce to wait. In twenty-seven days Octavian had completed his plans and again set sail for Asia, intending to invade Egypt by the Syrian route.

Antonius knew that he need expect no mercy. He had sent repeated messengers to Octavian, asking that he might be allowed to spend the remainder of his days in the obscurity of private life, but had received a stern refusal. Cleopatra too had begged that the throne of Egypt might be secured to her children, but her emissaries had returned with the evasive reply that she might expect every favour if she would either put Antonius to death or banish him from her dominions. The Egyptian Queen, who had decked her galleys with the laurels and garlands of victory when she appeared off the port of Alexandria in her flight from Actium, in order to obtain an unopposed entry, had signalised her arrival by a massacre of all from whom she feared danger. Antonius was left without a single legion in the whole of Asia. His vassal kings had all made their peace with Octavian; even Herod of Judæa deserted him in his extremity. Canidius, fleeing from Greece, brought him the news that his powerful land army had gone over to the enemy, and when he made his way to Alexandria from Libya to rejoin Cleopatra he found her planning a wild and romantic scheme of quitting Egypt,

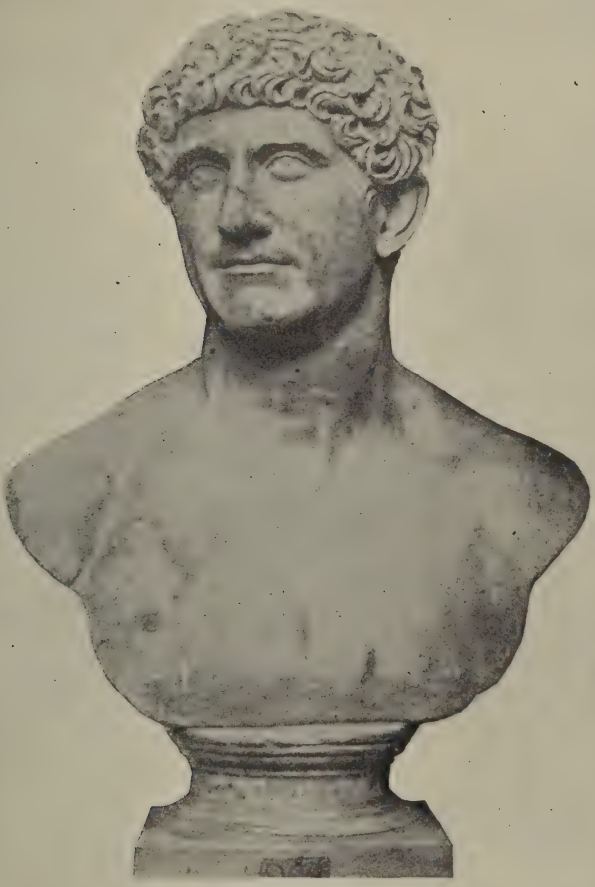
dragging her galleys overland to the Red Sea, and setting out, like a second Dido, to found another kingdom beyond the reach of Octavian's vengeance. But this mad project was speedily abandoned and the lovers determined to remain where they were and await the course of events. Antonius gave way to moody despair. He withdrew from the court, buried himself in a little house, near Pharos, and affected to live like Timon, cursing the ingratitude of mankind. But soon, wearying of his hermitage, he returned to Cleopatra's side and again plunged into debauchery. The lovers had in happier days founded a society which they called the "Inimitable Livers"; they now instituted another to which they gave the title of "The Companions in Death." But their gaieties were hollow. Cleopatra experimented with poisons to discover the least painful mode of death; but she still hoped to live. In the intervals of their feastings, Antonius sometimes remembered that he had once been a great captain of men, and made fitful preparations for the defence of Egypt, and when at length Octavian's army marched up to the gates of Alexandria and encamped before the city, Antonius placed himself at the head of his cavalry, made a brisk sally, and returned in triumph from this trifling skirmish. But treachery was at work. A few days later, when the Egyptian fleet left the harbour to give battle, while he was to attack the Octavians by land, Antonius saw to his dismay the rowers salute, instead of fighting, the enemy, while his own cavalry deserted in a body. His infantry were routed and driven back in confusion

into the city, and Antonius was informed that Cleopatra had taken her own life.

It was time, therefore, he thought, that he should take his, and he bade his faithful servant, Eros, strike the fatal blow. Eros drew his sword but turned the point upon himself and fell dead at his master's feet. "This, Eros, was nobly done," cried Antonius; "thy heart would not permit thee to kill thy master, but thou hast taught him what to do by thy example." Seizing the sword, he plunged it into his bowels and fell back upon a couch. While he lay in his agony, a messenger came to him from Cleopatra, whom he believed to be dead, bidding him come to her. Rallying for a moment at the news that his mistress was still alive, he ordered his servants to carry him in their arms to the foot of the monument in which Cleopatra had taken refuge. Not daring to undo the bolts and open the door, the Egyptian Queen and her woman attendants let down a rope from the window and the dying man was with difficulty hoisted up. There are many moving stories in the pages of Plutarch, but none more tragic than that in which he describes Cleopatra straining at the rope, with every feature distorted by the violence of the effort, and the agonised endeavour of the dying Antonius to stretch out his arms to his beloved Queen, as he hung suspended in mid-air. "When she had drawn him up and laid him on a bed, she stood over him, and rent her clothes, beat and wounded her breast, and, wiping the blood from his disfigured countenance, she called him her lord, her emperor, her husband. Her soul was

absorbed in his misfortune; and she seemed totally to have forgotten that she had any miseries of her own." With his last breath Antonius tried to soothe her grief and implored her to consult her own safety, but even before he expired, Proculeius arrived from Octavian with orders to take Cleopatra alive. The doors of the mausoleum were still fast. Octavian's officer, however, contrived to obtain a ladder and enter by the window, while his friend, Gallus, held Cleopatra's attendants in conversation below. A warning cry apprised the Egyptian Queen of her danger and she drew a dagger to stab herself, but her uplifted arm was seized by Proculeius, who removed the weapon and bade her trust confidently to the chivalry and clemency of her conqueror.

Octavian entered the city without opposition, not as a conqueror in the panoply of war, but in close converse with the Alexandrian philosopher, Arius. Mounting the tribunal prepared for him in the Gymnasium, he assured the people, who prostrated themselves before him, that he would do their city no harm. The memory of its founder, Alexander, the beauty of its streets, and his friendship for Arius alike, he said, combined to dispose him to be lenient. Antyllus, the eldest son of Antonius by Fulvia, was put to death; his dead rival's other children were spared and were brought up by the virtuous Octavia as her own. Cæsarion, the son of Cleopatra by Julius, had been sent for safety by his mother into Æthiopia, but the wretched youth was persuaded to turn back and, while Octavian was



MARK ANTONY

MARCUS ANTONIUS.
IN THE VATICAN MUSEUM, ROME.

hesitating how to deal with him, Arius whispered in his ear that there ought not to be too many Cæsars. The hint was enough.

Meanwhile, Octavian had permitted Cleopatra to bury Antonius in the tomb she had prepared for him, and sought to allay her fears. She had abandoned herself to the luxury of frenzied grief at the loss of her lover and, after performing the funeral rites with great magnificence,— Plutarch tells us that she was allowed to expend what she thought proper on the occasion,— she threatened to starve herself to death. Octavian, however, prevailed upon her to return to the palace, and, when she had recovered from the fever into which she had been thrown, he himself visited her in person. The accounts of what took place at this celebrated interview vary considerably in points of detail. According to Dion Cassius, Cleopatra decked herself in her most sumptuous robes and set herself once more to play the courtesan, hoping that the charms which had ensnared Julius Cæsar and Antonius would still prove potent and alluring enough to captivate her youthful conqueror. Pictures and busts of the murdered Dictator adorned the apartment, while letters which she had received from him were placed in her bosom, ready for instant reference, whereby to melt the heart of the dead man's adopted son. Plutarch, on the other hand, declares that the Queen was lying on a couch, clad only in a single bedgown, when Octavian appeared, and that she threw herself at his feet as he entered the room, her hair in disorder, her voice trembling, her eyes sunk, and her

breast still bearing the marks of her self-inflicted injuries. Roman authors were only too ready to blacken the character of the Queen, and seem to have accepted the story that Cleopatra was perfectly willing to take Octavian as her new lover, though her tears for Antonius were hardly dry upon her cheeks. Whether this is a gross libel upon one whose amazing fascinations have passed into a proverb, and whose career it seems incongruous to judge by the frigid standard of Western morality, it is impossible to say. But, whatever Cleopatra's hopes may have been before this interview, they were rudely shattered at its close. Octavian was proof against tears and entreaties. He remained cold to her pleading. Though not insensible to woman's beauty, he was on this occasion made of stone, remembering that it was against this Queen, now lying at his feet, that he, as the head of the Roman State, had drawn the sword. He listened in silence as she attempted to justify her policy and pleaded that she had been constrained against her will to fight against Rome, but held out no hope that he would continue her upon the throne of Egypt. Then she begged for life, placed in his hands an inventory of the royal treasures, and when Seleucus, one of her treasurers, accused her of suppressing some articles in the account, she blazed up in sudden fury and caught the offending Egyptian by the hair. Octavian smiled at the outburst and courteously accepted her assurance that she had merely reserved a few trinkets to offer as personal gifts to Octavia and Livia. Congratulating himself

that the Queen had abandoned all thought of suicide, he solemnly promised that she might expect the most honourable treatment at his hands, and quitted her presence well satisfied, for he had already made up his mind to send Cleopatra to Rome to grace the triumph which there awaited him.

His purpose was known to Cornelius Dolabella, one of the younger officers of his staff, who had been smitten with Cleopatra's charms. Dolabella sent her warning of his chief's intentions. On learning the humiliating fate in store for her, the Queen begged permission from Octavian to make her last oblations to Antonius. The request was granted, and Cleopatra resolved to die. The closing scene is one of the best known in ancient history. After kneeling at the tomb of the lover whom she was so soon to rejoin, after crowning it with flowers and kissing the cold marble, she ordered the table to be spread for a last magnificent feast. The basket of figs, which hid the poisonous asp, was brought in at the close and then Cleopatra dictated a letter to Octavian and ordered all her attendants to leave the mausoleum excepting her two trusted women, Iris and Charmion. The letter contained a passionate request that she might be buried in the tomb of Antonius, and Octavian hurriedly despatched messengers to prevent the Queen from taking her life. They arrived too late. When they broke open the doors Cleopatra lay dead upon the golden couch, clad in all her royal ornaments. At her feet lay Iris, dead like her mistress, while Charmion, hardly able to support herself, was adjusting with trembling

fingers the diadem upon the dead Queen's brow. "Charmion, was this well done?" exclaimed the messenger. "Perfectly well," was the proud reply, "and worthy a descendant of the Kings of Egypt."

CHAPTER IX

THE NEW RÉGIME

OCTAVIAN had now attained the summit of his ambition, and at the age of thirty-three found himself the undisputed master of the Roman world. The Republican party and the Republic itself had lain buried for twelve years in the graves of Brutus and Cassius; the mausoleum of Cleopatra at Alexandria contained the body of his last and most dangerous rival. To whatever quarter he turned his eyes, danger threatened from none. Every legion had taken the oath to him; Rome itself was in the safe-keeping of his two trusted councillors, Mæcenas and Agrippa. A son of his old colleague, the now humiliated Lepidus, had, it is true, recklessly attempted to form a conspiracy against him in the capital, but the vigilant Mæcenas swooped down upon the conspirator and transported him under a strong guard to Octavian in the East, where he paid the penalty for his mad folly with his life. There can be no more striking testimony, both to the absolute sense of security felt by Octavian and to the absolute acquiescence of public opinion in his personal domination, than the fact that the

conqueror of Antonius was able to spend nearly two entire years without shewing himself in Rome. He had quitted the city in the midsummer of 31; he did not return to it until the August of 29.

Octavian destroyed the throne of the Ptolemies, and incorporated Egypt in the Roman dominion. We shall consider more closely this important step in a later chapter; in this place it will suffice to state that he definitely annexed the land of the Nile, placed it under the control of his friend, Cornelius Gallus, and, leaving three legions to overawe its passive and unwarlike population, quitted Alexandria and spent the winter in Samos. But before he left Egypt he thoroughly despoiled the treasuries and palaces of Cleopatra, and the plunder he thus acquired paid for the war which he had now brought to a triumphant conclusion. Throughout his career Octavian's most constant need had been for ready money. His inability to pay his troops the bounties, which he had been compelled from time to time to promise them, had led to constant mutinies and revolts. His uncle's legacy, the generous contributions of his friends, and the confiscation of the property of the proscribed had scarcely enabled him to meet his most pressing obligations. We can hardly doubt that his policy of inflaming public opinion against the Queen of Egypt had been dictated, at least in part, by his desire to get possession of the enormous accumulations of wealth which she had inherited from the long line of kings who had preceded her on the throne of Egypt. Cnæus Pompeius Gabinius, Julius Cæsar, and Marcus Antonius had

all dipped their hands freely into that inexhaustible store, but enough still remained to free Octavian from his pecuniary embarrassments. By making Egypt his own private domain, and carefully regulating its finances and revenues, he rarely lacked for money again. If the spoils of Egypt paid for his rise to an imperial position, the tribute which continued to flow steadily into his exchequer from that country oiled the wheels of the imperial machine for the remainder of his life.

As we have said, Octavian returned to Rome in the August of B.C. 29. He was then enjoying his fifth consulship. Throughout his absence, both Senate and people had been compliant to his will. They had rejoiced, and with sincerity, over his triumph at Actium; they had heard with relief — if with a sense of pity — of the final tragedy at Alexandria. The question for them had not been a choice between liberty and subjection, but a choice between two masters, and they preferred Octavian, whose victory was a guarantee of peace, order, and decent administration. The enlightened and well calculated selfishness of the younger competitor promised the security and stability to which they had long been strangers. And as they could only guess his plans for the future, they hastened to shower decorations upon him. They formally confirmed all his acts; they permitted him on all occasions to wear the scarlet mantle and laurel crown of the conqueror; they instituted in his honour a quinquennial festival; they added his name to the hallowed formula in which the sacred colleges prayed

for the welfare of the Senate and the people; they bade the Vestal Virgins go forth to meet him when he should approach the gates of Rome, and they accorded to him the rare honour of a triple triumph. Octavian signified his gracious acceptance of these honorific decrees while he still lingered in the East busy with the work of reorganisation, but at length he entered the city in the garb of a conqueror. The trophies he had won six years before in Dalmatia and Pannonia adorned his first triumph; then came the spoils gained in the sea-fight at Actium; while the third triumph represented his victory over the Queen of Egypt. Cleopatra, by her self-inflicted death, had escaped the crowning indignity of being borne as a living captive through the streets of Rome, but her children were there, and the effigy of the Queen upon her couch, as his lieutenants had found her in her death-chamber, was placed upon a triumphal car and was the cynosure of all eyes upon that eventful day. True as ever to the crafty policy by which he sought to convince the Romans that the war in which he had been engaged was a foreign war, and his victory the victory of the Western over the Eastern civilisation, Octavian took care that no trophies of the dead Antonius should figure in the procession. He wished, as far as might be possible, to bury all memories of the Triumvirate which had destroyed the constitution.

Passing to the Capitol, the conqueror paid the usual homage of sacrifice to Jupiter, Best and Greatest, and then descending to the Forum, he dedicated a new temple to Minerva, opened with great pomp



THE SUPPOSED TEMPLE OF VESTA.

FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY ALINARI.

the recently completed Basilica of Julius, and placed therein a statue of the goddess Victory. By these religious celebrations Octavian seemed to claim the sanction of Heaven for the new régime which he was about to inaugurate. Nor did he forget to amuse the people of Rome with a series of lavish entertainments and spectacles, to conciliate their favour by a generous largesse, and to reward his veterans with the bounties they had richly earned. He knew the advantage of starting well, of disarming covert criticism as well as open opposition, and of persuading the world that an era of prosperity and peace was about to open. As an earnest thereof, he poured out in Rome the wealth of plundered Egypt, which, according to the testimony of Suetonius, had so immediate an effect upon the money market that it brought down with a run the high rates of interest, which had prevailed for many years, and greatly increased the price of land and all other commodities. But still more important and significant was the pledge of peace, which he gave by closing the doors of the Temple of Janus, which stood on the fringe of the Roman Forum. Within living memory those doors had always remained open, as a sign that war was afoot in some part, either near or remote, of the Roman dominions, and that the legionaries were either facing the barbarians in battle or were turning their swords upon one another. Now they were solemnly closed, for the third time only in the history of the city, and the world, which was tired and exhausted with continued strife, hailed the act with universal acclamation. A campaign, it is true, was

in progress on the Danube, where Crassus was waging successful war against the Daci, Bastarnæ, and Getæ, and was carving out the new province of Mœsia, but at such an hour the people were not inclined to stand out for pedantic accuracy of diction or literal truth. What they gladly seized hold of was the symbolic meaning of the ceremony and its implicit indication of future policy. Hence the chorus of praise which arose at the prospect of peace, the memories of which roused Velleius Paterculus to genuine eloquence, as he described how the civil wars that had raged for twenty years had at length drawn to a close, how foreign strife had been buried, peace recalled once more, and everywhere the fury of arms lulled to sleep. It is, indeed, impossible to lay too much stress upon the exhaustion of the Roman world, if we would understand the absolutely passive acquiescence with which it accepted the new régime. No one felt this more strongly than Tacitus,— writing long after the event,— whose sympathies were all on the side of the fallen Republic. Again and again, in those terse, epigrammatic sentences of his,[1] he reveals this dominating truth, and we see the eagerness of the world to turn its back upon a hateful past, full of murder, war, rapine, and

[1] For example: "*Cuncta discordiis civilibus fessa*"; "*Cunctos dulcedine otii pellexit*" — where the choice of the verb betrays his political leanings — "*Tuta et præsentia quam vetera et periculosa mallent*" — where again there lurks the covert sneer at men who forsook their principles, even while he is bound to admit their complete justification:—"*Non aliud discordantis patriæ remedium fuisse quam ut ab uno regeretur.*"

all imaginable horrors, and to look to the future and to the one man who held the future in his hands.

Moreover, Octavian had carefully prepared the ground for the seed he was about to sow. He had been virtually master of Rome and of the West for twelve years, ever since the Treaty of Brundisium in B. C. 40. His victory over Sextus Pompeius—whereby he had re-established the security of Rome and Italy—and the overthrow of Lepidus in B. C. 36, combined with the withdrawal to the East of Antonius, who, as the years passed by, lost touch with Western affairs and became almost an alien power, had enabled him to consolidate his position. The battle of Actium is naturally taken as the date from which the new régime starts, but it had really begun many years before.

When, therefore, Octavian returned to Rome to take up his residence in the capital, there were three alternatives open to him. He might genuinely restore the Republic and the Republican forms of government; or he might destroy the Republican forms of government and frankly create a monarchy; or he might effect a sort of compromise between the two, and retain the forms of the old constitution while safeguarding his own unconstitutional and un-Republican position as supreme Head of the State. There is no real evidence to shew that he hesitated for long in making up his mind to select the path of compromise. To restore the Republic, to create anew an organism which had died a violent death, was impossible. The Republic had proved itself during the two previous generations incapable of

governing a world empire such as the Roman dominion had now become. It had been rotten and corrupt to the core in its administration of the provinces. Its constitution, with its elaborate series of checks and counterchecks, had utterly broken down. The rise of a professional army had merely hastened and completed its downfall. Every attempt to create a great constitutional party, as a counterpoise to the narrow ideas of the oligarchical clique on the one hand and to the turbulence of mob-rule on the other, had failed ignominiously. The Senate had been unable in Cicero's day to rise to the conception of decent and honest administration. What hope was there that they would rise to it after the carnage of the civil wars? Even, therefore, if Octavian had genuinely desired to restore the *status quo antea*, as a statesman he must have known that this would entail renewed disorder. The first ambitious pro-consul with resources sufficient to raise and pay an army, and with enough military genius to win his soldiers' confidence, would have the careers of Julius, of Pompeius, of Antonius, and of Octavian himself ever before his eyes, and would be drawn irresistibly along the same perilous path. Again, even supposing such a restoration of the Republic had been feasible, how could Octavian have guaranteed his own safety? If he had descended to a private station, after restoring the oligarchs to power, they would, sooner or later, have invented a pretext for his destruction, and, to save himself, he would again have had to call upon the services of his veterans. But self-abnegation

was no part of the character of Octavian. He had aspired to rule at the age of nineteen; it was not likely that he would abdicate just at the moment when he had attained to universal dominion. Sulla had abdicated the dictatorship in 79, and within ten years the constitution he had set up was overthrown. Cnæus Pompeius withdrew from public life in 70, but was compelled in self-defence to re-enter it three years later; he had disbanded his army in 62, and the Senate had promptly refused the ratification of his acts. Political disinterestedness paid no better then than now. Octavian could not have resigned his position in 28 without making himself the target for all his foes.

When, therefore, Suetonius tells us that Octavian twice had thoughts of restoring the Republic — *de reddenda re publica bis cogitavit* — once at the period we are now considering and a second time when he was weakened by continued ill-health and the cares of office, we cannot accept the statement without the gravest qualifications. He felt compunctions, says the historian, because he had so often cast it in the teeth of Antonius that but for him the Republic might safely be restored. No doubt Octavian had frequently employed this argument, when justifying to others the unconstitutional position which he held, and had thrown upon his colleague and rival all the odium of the Triumvirate. But throughout he had been playing for absolute not for divided power, for the whole and not for the half of the Roman world, and it is ridiculous to suppose that he seriously considered the question of abdication merely because

his enemies might find, in certain of his earlier speeches, passages in which he had protested that he would thankfully be content with a private station. The same story appears in Dion Cassius, but it is by him elaborated with abundant detail. According to his account, Octavian summoned Mæcenas and Agrippa to his councils and debated with them the policy he should pursue. The historian purports to give in full the speeches of both, and attributes to Agrippa the extraordinary advice that Octavian should abdicate. But the reasoning by which he justifies this counsel is even more extraordinary than the counsel itself. Agrippa's speech is little more more than a rhetorical thesis in praise of personal ease. He recommends the delights of obscurity as contrasted with the cares and burdens of office, and urges upon Octavian the craven argument that to be safe he must not arouse the envy or hatred of his contemporaries, and that he must prove the sincerity of his filial piety to Julius by abdicating now that he has avenged his murder. If sentiments such as these were ever uttered by Agrippa, they little agree with all else that we know of his character.

The speech of Mæcenas, on the other hand, is a much more valuable historical document. The historian represents him as advising Octavian to adopt the measures which he subsequently carried out, and the reconstruction he advocates practically represents the imperial system as it existed when Dion Cassius wrote his history. Mæcenas's main argument is that for Octavian to give back to the Senate and the people their old freedom would be like

placing a sword in the hands of a mad child. He was bound to grasp power firmly with both hands. If he did not, he might expect the certain rise of a constant succession of men like Lepidus, Sertorius, Brutus, and Cassius to throw the State into confusion and to compass his destruction. He must, therefore, repress the turbulence of the mob and mob-assemblies and restrict all political power to himself and a few wise counsellors. In other words, Mæcenas resolutely advocated the establishment of an empire in all but name, and the advice, whether actually given or not, was acted on by Octavian. He had not waded through slaughter to a throne in order to stultify himself by an act of Quixotic and mischievous resignation at the very moment of victory. His personal ambitions made this impossible. His knowledge of what the welfare of the State required rendered it equally impossible. None knew better than he that the stability of the Roman dominion rested upon himself and upon the reconstruction which he alone was strong enough to carry through.

Then, as a genuine restoration of the Republic was out of the question, Octavian had to decide whether he should establish a monarchy. That this was a practical alternative is beyond all doubt. His power and his will were absolute. If, after leading his veterans in triumph through the streets of Rome, he had closed the doors of the Senate and abolished by a single edict all the higher magistracies; if he had at once boldly assumed the diadem and the insignia of monarchy, it is difficult to see how any

effective opposition could have been offered to his designs. But the very name of king was an abomination. However far the Romans had degenerated from the old Republican ideas of simplicity and equality, they still regarded with detestation the trappings of royalty. To them the word king was synonymous with tyrant and betokened an alien and un-Roman civilisation. Antonius had deeply outraged public sentiment and public opinion by wearing the diadem and playing at royalty in the court of Cleopatra, and the great Julius himself had dealt a severe blow at his popularity by his evident hankering after the glittering symbols of monarchy. It is hard for the modern student to appreciate the strength of this rooted prejudice in the Roman mind — a prejudice which survived even the first two centuries of the Roman Empire — but Octavian was fully aware of its intensity and did not fail to take it into account. He had never been a mere reckless adventurer. The older he grew the more ready he became to follow the line of least resistance. Why then should he run risks which might prove to be desperate, simply for the sake of a high-sounding name and a few baubles? Why should he exasperate and alienate public opinion? Why invite conspiracy and rebellion? Why create a stubborn and relentless opposition merely that his ears might be flattered with the title of king? He may have been tempted, like other conquerers both before and since his day, by the idea of a crown, and by the hope of founding a regular dynasty, but, if he was, he put the temptation from him.

And thus he was inevitably thrown back upon the third alternative, upon, that is to say, the middle path of compromise. He would retain the semblance of a Republic, the semblance of liberty and freedom, and the semblance of the old constitution, and yet at the same time retain his absolute ascendency. There should be a Republic in form; others should share with him the insignia of office, but he alone would be supreme. We shall see with what astuteness, and with what insight into the character of those whom he governed, he pressed towards the accomplishment of his designs, until in the end the creator of the Roman Empire dared to inscribe in marble the living lie that he had restored the Roman Republic. An organised hypocrisy, perhaps, but one which fully served its purpose and helped to smooth the transition from the old to the new.





CHAPTER X

AUGUSTUS AND HIS POWERS

(30–23 B.C.)

FOR the year B.C. 28 Octavian associated with himself in the consulship his friend and minister, Marcus Agrippa, and one of his first acts was to hold a "*Lectio Senatus*." This duty had formed part of the functions of the censorship, but that venerable office had fallen into abeyance during the death-throes of the Republic and there had been no formal revision within living memory. Consequently, the Senate was, in the picturesque words of Suetonius, "a shapeless and disordered mob." It had originally consisted of six hundred members; Julius by his new creations had raised its number to nine hundred; Antonius had crowded it with his partisans, and there were now more than a thousand who wore the broad stripe upon their togas. Many of these had no shadow of claim to a place in the august assembly, but had gained admission by influence and bribery, without having filled the requisite magistracies which gave the right of entry. Octavian and Agrippa set themselves to weed out the

unfit. They offered the opportunity of voluntary withdrawal to all who desired to be spared the ignominy of expulsion, and fifty who took the hint were allowed to retain the senatorial ornaments as a reward for their frank acknowledgment of personal unfitness. Another hundred and fifty were expelled in disgrace and the numbers of the Senate were thus reduced to about eight hundred.

Octavian did not hold the office of censor, which from time immemorial had been considered incompatible with the tenure of the consulship. But, if he was not actually censor, he was at least invested with censorial powers. Either then or at some later date the new title of *Præfectus Morum* was bestowed upon the head of the State, to take the place of the censorship, which thenceforward practically became extinct and was but seldom revived. But the revision of the Senate had a result even more important than the restoration of that august body to its ancient dignity and the rehabilitation of its character. It had been the custom of the censors in the old times, on the conclusion of their periodical revisions, to select the name of the most respected ex-censor in the Senate and place it at the head of the roll of membership. According to the rules which governed the procedure of the House, the presiding consul always called upon the senator whose name stood in this place of honour to open the discussion on the subject in debate. The distinction was purely honorary; the title of *Princeps Senatus* carried with it no other privilege than that of speaking first, and since the death of the venerable

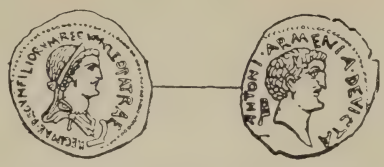
Quintus Catulus in B.C. 60 the title itself had fallen into abeyance. It was now to be revived with a new significance. Octavian's name, at the suggestion of Agrippa, was placed first upon the list, and he thus became Prince of the Senate. This thoroughly constitutional appellation speedily acquired an unconstitutional importance. The word itself suggested to the Roman ear no connection with monarchy, but just as the name of Cæsar has become the symbol of despotism, so the innocent and Republican title of Princeps has become the appanage of Royalty. In the opening chapters of the *Annals* Tacitus twice takes occasion to lay emphasis upon this important fact. "Augustus," he says, "subjected the world to empire under the title of Prince." And again: "The Republic was organised neither as a monarchy nor as a dictatorship, but under the title of a Prince." So, too, in a famous passage of the *Histories*, he speaks of the legions discovering "the secret of empire that a Prince can be made elsewhere than in Rome," while Suetonius, in writing of Caligula, says that he came within an ace of assuming the diadem and converting to the definite form of a monarchy the system which masqueraded as a Principate. It would be a mistake to suppose that when Octavian first became Prince of the Senate the senators and the people at once appreciated the full significance of the act. The shrewder among them might guess what it portended in the future, but in all probability not even Octavian himself foresaw how quickly the title of *Princeps Senatus* would be shortened into

that of Princeps alone and would stand in the eyes of the world as the designation of sovereign authority.

The revision of the Senate and the taking of the census, which shewed that there were 4,063,000 Roman citizens of military age, were the two principal measures of the year 28. Octavian's sixth consulship, however, was also distinguished by the formal annulment of every illegal and unconstitutional measure which had been passed during the Triumvirate. "At last, in his sixth consulship," says Tacitus, "Cæsar Augustus, feeling his power secure, annulled the decrees of his Triumvirate and gave us a constitution which might serve us in peace under a monarchy." In other words, the slate was wiped clean. But though the pages of the statute-book whereon these measures were inscribed were thus formally cancelled or even torn bodily out, their consequences remained, and this act of generosity or repentance on the part of Octavian signified little. The Actian festival, which he celebrated this year on a scale of unexampled magnificence; his fourfold increase of the ordinary corn distribution; his cancellation of arrears of debt to the treasury; his lavish expenditure upon the new public buildings which were beginning to rise on every hand — all these things were so much dust thrown into the eyes of the people to reconcile them to the changes which he was about to introduce, and to the consolidation of his own power. And his success was marvellously complete, so complete, indeed, that when he met the Senate on the first day of January in 27 and

entered upon his seventh consulship, he felt secure enough to offer to resign the whole of his extraordinary powers. But he took care that he received back again in another form the powers which he then laid down. The Senate conferred upon him the most supreme authority which they had to bestow. They gave him the *pro-consulare imperium* for ten years. In other words, they legalised his military position as chief of the Roman armies; for the provinces assigned to him, in the great division of the provinces of the Empire which was now made, were precisely those in which the legions were stationed. By such a decree they themselves invested Octavian with supreme military control, and voluntarily rivetted his yoke upon their necks.

At the same time they conferred upon him the title of Augustus. It was Munatius Plancus, the arch-traitor, who moved that this should be the cognomen of Octavian, after others had proposed that he should take the name of Romulus, as the second founder of Rome. The choice was skilful, for the word was closely associated with the ideas of divine majesty and abundant fruitfulness. The epithet which had hitherto been confined to the holiest temples and the most sacred religious observances of the Republic, and which had been specially reserved to denote the bounty of Jupiter himself, was thus transferred to an individual, and it was too conspicuous, too isolating, too suggestive of worship and adoration to be compatible with political freedom. Augustus, as we shall henceforth call him, must have felt perfectly satisfied when he accepted



COIN OF CLEOPATRA AND M. ANTONIUS.



COIN OF AUGUSTUS CELEBRATING THE CAPTURE OF EGYPT.



COIN OF ORODES I OF PARTHIA.



COIN OF AMYNTAS, KING OF GALATIA.

this flattering and supreme distinction, together with the pro-consular imperium which invested him with the undivided control of the legions, that he had lost nothing by refraining from establishing a monarchy. The Senate had granted him a title which was to transcend in dignity that of King, which his Greek subjects translated into "Sebastos" or "the Hallowed One," and though his imperium was limited nominally to a term of ten years, he knew well that in the interval he would either fail utterly and lose all, or he would be able to extort a renewal for as long a period as he desired. He was now firmly seated in the saddle and the new régime had begun. He was Augustus; he was Consul with full pro-consular imperium; he was Imperator; he was Princeps Senatus, and he wielded all the functions of a censor. There still remained other powers and offices to be absorbed, but for the present he was content. Rome and the Roman and Greek world were content also.

Then, towards the close of the year, Augustus again quitted Rome, nor did he return until nearly three years had elapsed. The affairs of Gaul and Spain claimed his personal attention throughout this period. It was believed that he meditated an expedition to Britain, but if that had been his intention the project was speedily dropped and was never revived in his lifetime. Augustus's stay in Gaul was brief, and after completing in Lugdunum, the capital, the census of the province and regulating its tribute, he passed into Spain at the head of a powerful army. There a far more difficult problem

presented itself and one which was not finally solved for many years to come. The Iberian Peninsula had never been thoroughly subdued by the Republic, and tranquillity was only assured in the immediate neighbourhood of the legions. The natives were still as adept in the art and practice of guerilla warfare as they had been in the days of Sertorius and, though constantly defeated as often as they offered battle in the plains, they maintained a ceaseless struggle in their mountain fastnesses. Augustus crossed the Pyrenees, but was soon compelled by illness to repair to Tarraco, on the coast. This he made the new capital of the province Tarraconensis, formerly known as Hither Spain, removing thither the centre of administration from Nova Carthago, the modern Carthagena. While he lay ill his lieutenants overthrew the Cantabrians in a great battle near Vellica, and the enemy betook themselves to the hills. The spirit of the tribes was not yet thoroughly broken; in fact, they rose in revolt as soon as Augustus quitted Spain; but he laid the foundations, during his stay in the country, for the permanent pacification of the peninsula.

Augustus returned to the capital in the year 24, again ordered the Temple of Janus to be closed, and again distributed a lavish largesse among the people. He had been regularly elected to the consulship at the close of each year, and he entered upon the office for the eleventh time in the January of 23, choosing as his colleague Calpurnius Piso. Soon afterwards he was attacked by an illness even more serious than that which had prostrated him at Tar-

raco, and little hope was entertained of his recovery. At such a moment there can have been only one question uppermost in the public mind. It was this —If Augustus died, who would be his successor? Whom would he nominate as heir, not alone to his private fortune, but to the supreme power? Would it be Marcellus, the son of his sister Octavia by her first husband, to whom two years before he had given the hand of his daughter Julia in marriage? Or would his choice fall upon his old friend and co-adjutor Agrippa? The excitement in Rome at such an hour can be imagined, especially as Agrippa, who was the fittest to succeed, was known to be jealous of the favours which Augustus was lavishing upon his young nephew and son-in-law, Marcellus. Augustus summoned the chief men of the State to his bedchamber, and there discussed with them the condition of public affairs. But if they expected from him, in the hour which they believed to be almost his last, the candour which he had never displayed in health, they were disappointed. The consummate actor dissimulated to the very end. Just before he dismissed them from the room he handed without a word a detailed account of the resources of the State to his colleague Piso, and, at the same moment, placed his seal-ring in the hands of Agrippa. Nothing could have been more characteristic of the man. The actions were such as to bear a variety of interpretations, each as plausible as the other. By giving to his fellow-Consul a schedule of the State he seemed to be handing back his trust entire to the Republic and to the Senate; by giving his ring

to Agrippa he seemed to nominate him as his heir and successor. If the story is genuine — and we cannot be certain that it is not either a clever invention of later times to illustrate by a crowning instance the dissimulation of Augustus, or merely one of those canards which purport to relate what takes place in the privacy of palaces — if Augustus really believed that he was on the point of death when he left this cruel enigma to torture and perplex the public mind, no condemnation can be too severe for such cynical irony, though in one sense it needed but this to round off a career of studied hypocrisy. The signet-ring with which he sealed all papers of State bore the device of a Sphinx. For the Sphinx to speak out in the moment of death would have been to destroy a perfect illusion. His will might have made his purpose clear, but the probabilities are that if Augustus had died then, the sword would again have leaped from the scabbard.

Such speculations, however, are idle. Augustus recovered, to the joy of the whole world, and the dangerous hour passed. Again it was characteristic of the man that the crisis was no sooner over than he solemnly declared to the world that he had had no intention of nominating a successor. He affected to regard such a suggestion with horror, as though it imputed to him treasonable designs against the Republic. He was no king that the government should pass, as though it were a mere asset in his personal estate, to his heir. He was merely Consul, the first man in a free Commonwealth, and if he wielded enormous and extraordin-

ary powers, had they not all been formally bestowed upon him by the voluntary vote of the Senate? To prove his sincerity, he was even willing to read his will in public and thus convince the most sceptical that he had never harboured such a thought. But the senators at once protested that they needed no such proof of his single-minded patriotism and warmly repudiated the idea that their confidence in him required to be confirmed. Consequently the incident remained without further light being thrown upon it, and it has perplexed posterity as successfully as it baffled Augustus's contemporaries. And, although there is no written authority to warrant the suspicion, it is perhaps permissible to suggest that Augustus deliberately caused the reports as to the gravity of his illness to be exaggerated, and made political capital out of his undoubtedly feeble and precarious health. It was clearly his policy to bring sharply home to his people a sense of their dependence upon him, to make them realise their need of his controlling hand, to foster the belief that, if he were removed chaos, would inevitably return. Hence his continual references in private conversation to the blessings of retirement and to the burdens of responsibility; hence too his constant hints in public that he contemplated withdrawal, hints which were always ambiguous in meaning and clothed in the most cryptic language. This year, however, he not only hinted at, but insisted upon, withdrawal from one of his many offices. He resigned the consulship, which he had held without intermission for the last ten years, and bestowed

the vacant dignity for the remainder of the year upon Lucius Sestius, who had been a quæstor in the service of Marcus Brutus and still venerated the memory of the Republican chief. Such an act of magnanimity cost him nothing. Autocrats do not confer decorations upon their avowed political opponents except with the object of disarming their opposition and silencing their criticism, or because they feel absolutely secure and can afford to be generous. Augustus, by resigning his consular fasces to Sestius, was merely playing to the gallery of public opinion, which is easily impressed by a show of abnegation.

The truth was soon patent. Augustus had come to the conclusion that certain extensions of his powers were necessary for the smooth working of the administration. To obtain those extensions he was willing to lay down the consulship, though that was still the chief magistracy of the year. He may have found that there were certain inconveniences in sharing the government of Rome and Italy with a colleague. He may even have contemplated occasions arising, especially if he were absent from Rome, when a colleague in the consulship might thwart his policy. Moreover, it is well to bear in mind that Augustus was most scrupulous in respecting the outward forms of the Republic and his repeated assumption of the consulship was distinctly opposed to Republican tradition. He might, indeed, have ruled as Consul by extending the powers of that office and dispensing with colleagues. But he preferred other means, which were just as unconstitutional in reality though outwardly they did less

violence to tradition. The announcement of his resolve created great uneasiness in Rome. He was pressed to reconsider his determination, but remained obdurate and retired from the city to Alba, while the Senate anxiously debated in what form they should give him a renewed pledge of their confidence. No doubt Augustus, by means of trusted intermediaries, himself suggested the new powers which would prove agreeable to him, and finally expressed his desire that he should be invested with the full tribunician authority and an extension of the proconsular imperium. The latter need not detain us long. He had already enjoyed for four years the proconsular imperium in half the provinces of the Roman world; that power was now extended to the other half, which remained as before under the control of the Senate and under governors appointed by that body. But the tribunician authority — the *tribunicia potestas* — was something, if not entirely new, at any rate magnified beyond all precedent.

According to some authorities, this *potestas* had been offered to him immediately after the defeat of Antonius. Whether he accepted it, is not clear. But, if he did, the *potestas* in its new form was so essentially distinct that thenceforth Augustus indicated the years of his reign by the number of times he had held the tribunician power. The title was given him for life, but he assumed it afresh every year and it became the outward symbol of his sovereign authority. Why then did he choose the one title which, above all others, was associated in the history of Rome with the power of the people, with

democracy and the popular will? The answer is clear. The possession of the *tribunicia potestas* enabled him to draw into his hands all the threads of power which had formerly rested in the hands of the people. He did not become simply tribune, because the tribunate was a collegiate body, consisting of ten members, and because, as a patrician and Imperator, he was not eligible for membership. But, while respecting the letter of the law, he did not scruple to invest himself with all the powers belonging to the office on a greatly extended scale. The *potestas* of the ordinary tribune was confined to the city of Rome and to the one-mile limit beyond the pomœrium. The *tribunicia potestas* of Augustus was valid throughout the whole of the Roman dominions. It gave him the right to convoke and preside over the Senate and the people, to propose new legislation, to receive and judge appeals, and to veto any measures of any magistrate of which he disapproved. The tribunes, as the direct champions and representatives of the people, had been held to be inviolable, sacrosanct, and exempt, during their term of office, from the ordinary obligations of the laws. Augustus now transferred this inviolability to himself, and from this sprang the law of *majestas*, one of the most formidable weapons of tyranny and absolute monarchy. The powers of the tribunes had been so absolute in theory and their right of interference with the machinery of government so complete that had it not been for the mutual jealousies of the ten members and the fact that the Senate had usually managed to secure each year at least one or two trib-

unes devoted to its interests, they must have been supreme in the Republic. Augustus now took over these powers not only in theory but in practice. The importance of this step, therefore, can hardly be exaggerated, and as the years passed by, its overwhelming significance became more and more clear. The tribunate had been the one office of the Republic full of inherent possibilities, and capable of development along a number of parallel lines. The tribune had been the special champion of the plebs; what more easy than for Augustus to represent that the *tribunicia potestas* with which he had been invested was the outward token that his rule was based upon the willing consent of the masses? He might thus speciously claim to be their representative as well as their ruler, their protector as well as their master. Again, the person of the tribune had been sacrosanct—what more easy and natural than the development of the theory that the holder of the *tribunicia potestas* was equally inviolable? Kings have claimed a special sanctity from divine right; Augustus could claim the same from the majesty of the sovereign people. The tribunes again could not only veto legislation but they had the power to imprison or even put to death any magistrate who resisted their authority. Augustus thus inherited from them all the familiar weapons of absolute authority. And so this new *tribunicia potestas*, conferred upon Augustus in B.C. 23, marks even more definitely than the title of Augustus and the assumption of proconsular imperium the consolidation into one pair of hands of the administrative and legislative machinery of the State.



CHAPTER XI

THE THEORY OF THE PRINCIPATE

MANY modern historians have misread and misinterpreted the work of Augustus by reason of their impatience of what they consider to be political shams. The present-day idea of an empire, or, indeed, of Cæsarism in any form, is essentially opposed to the idea of a republic, where the people are supreme. But to the Roman of the time of Augustus, as to Augustus himself, the words Principate and Republic bore a wholly different signification from that which now attaches to them. That Augustus carried dissimulation to its furthest limits must be frankly admitted, but it is absurd to suppose that this was his guiding principle. His great aim was to graft the Principate upon the Republic. He did not wish to uproot the old tree and plant a new one; his desire was to furnish the old tree with a new branch, which should be the most vital of all its limbs. In the constitution were many magistracies; he added yet another. If it was one of extraordinary scope and power, the justification was that the times required it. Augustus was no daring reformer like his uncle Julius,

who had been essentially the leader of the popular faction. He was a conservative, and, in some respects, a conservative of the school of Cato. And it is clear that, at any rate in the early years of his personal rule, after the fall of Antonius, he seriously attempted to associate the Senate with himself in the government of the Roman world. What he established in form was not so much an empire as a dyarchy. Thus Augustus declares in the *Monumentum Ancyranum*: "*Post id tempus præstiti omnibus dignitate; potestatis autem nihilo amplius habui quam qui fuerunt mihi quoque in magistratu collegæ.*" In other words, he only claims that he enjoyed more prestige than his colleagues; in actual power they were his equals. The words were false, and we can scarcely doubt that they were deliberately intended to create a false impression at the time when they were written. Twenty years before they might have been employed with much less open violence to the truth.

There is a striking phrase of Seneca which sums up admirably the whole position: "*Se induit reipublicæ Cæsar.*" Augustus, that is to say, clothed himself with the Republic. This was something more than merely masquerading in its old garments, as so many historians have interpreted his action; it was a real attempt — to vary the metaphor — to make an antiquated machine work with new driving wheels. Time was to shew that they were too powerful for the purpose, for they shattered the original framework to pieces. But the attempt was honestly made, and, as a conservative, he naturally

selected the Senate to be his coadjutor. Let us see, then, how the Senate fared at his hands. We have already shewn that one of Augustus's first acts was to revise its membership, to purge it of those whom the wits of Rome had dubbed in derision the Orcini and Charonitæ, and to hand over into its keeping half the provinces. He also created a number of new patrician *gentes* to fill the gaps which the civil wars had made in the number — never a large one — of those who were entitled to hold the auspices. Whether there had been any senatorial census under the Republic is doubtful. Augustus either introduced the principle or made the old census more rigorous, for he raised it from 400,000 to 800,000, and finally to 1,200,000 sesterces. He did not want poor men in his Senate, but men of substance with a stake in the country. Subsequent Emperors endorsed his policy. In Pliny's time every senator was obliged to invest part of his capital in Italian land. Augustus's rules were stringent, but he did not refuse himself the privilege of making exceptions. In numerous instances he provided out of his own purse sums sufficient to enable poor men, who were personally agreeable to him, to retain their seats in the Curia. These became his pensioners, while others, whom he disliked, he could at once degrade, as not complying with the requirements of the census, if they fell on evil times. With the same object in view — that of keeping the Senate select — he gradually reduced its numbers to six hundred; and though he did not change the avenues of entrance, by the

simple device of imposing upon the quæstorship the obligation to provide gladiatorial shows he confined the holding of that office to men of wealth. Moreover, no one was eligible to stand for the quæstorship unless he had served in the army as a military tribune, or had held one of the lower magistracies. Here again, in the case of favoured candidates, Augustus sometimes granted exemption from these obligations, and conferred the senatorial stripe on his own authority by his right of *adlectio*. Still more significant was the fact that, either indirectly or directly, he controlled, or could control if he so desired it, certain of the magisterial elections. He possessed the right of "nomination" and "recommendation." He could refuse, in other words, in his capacity as presiding officer, to accept the name of a candidate, on the plea that he was not qualified for the office; while his "recommendation" absolutely secured the favoured candidate's return without rejection or canvass (*sine repulsa et ambitu*). Augustus instituted stated days for the meetings of the Senate — twice a month, except in September and October — and attendance on these occasions was obligatory. Extraordinary meetings, however, might be summoned for any pressing business.

The original scheme of Augustus provided that the Senate should hold co-ordinate powers with the Princeps, though it rapidly degenerated into a subordinate position. The process of this degeneration, which in the nature of things was inevitable, cannot be traced step by step. Augustus, from the very

first, took the control of all foreign politics into his own hands. He alone made war and alliances. The senators might continue to receive foreign embassies and provincial deputations, as a formal act and by grace of the Princeps, but they had no armies in their provinces, with the exception of a single legion in Africa. Their share in foreign and military affairs was confined to hearing despatches read to them, voting resolutions of congratulation, and decreeing triumphs for the Princes of the Imperial House. Even as an advisory body, their influence was steadily lessened by the growing importance of the Imperial *Concilium*, or Council of State. Originally formed in B. C. 27, this Council consisted of the Emperor, the Consuls, the Consuls-elect, and fifteen senators elected by lot to act for six months. In 12 A. D. its composition was reorganised, and the senatorial members were chosen by the Emperor, but long before that time the *Concilium* had become a sort of Privy Council, in which legislation was initiated, and the main body of the Senate merely registered its decrees. The *condominium* of Principate and Senate thus year by year became more and more a matter of form. All real control rested with the Emperor. The world was governed not by the resolutions of the Senate, but by the edicts, decrees, and rescripts of the Emperor, by his Ministers of State, and by the new Imperial Civil Service.

Yet, in one matter of first-rate importance, Augustus increased the authority of the Senate. He bestowed upon it that jurisdiction in important criminal cases for which the Optimates had strug-

gled hard in the days of the Republic, and for the illegal exercise of which, during the Catilinarian conspiracy, Cicero was subsequently exiled. This had been vested from time immemorial in the sovereign people, and the popular party had stubbornly maintained the claim of the *populus* to criminal and appellate jurisdiction. The change had important results. It became the custom for the Senate to try all members of its own body who were charged with serious criminal offences, all political offenders of importance, all governors or officials charged with peculation or extortion, and all who were accused of the crime of lèse-majesté. The ordinary *quæstiones perpetuæ* continued as before to exercise their jurisdiction, but apparently the Senate, as the supreme High Court in criminal cases, could at any time order that a particular case should be brought before itself. This was a most important extension of the functions of the Senate, but here again its powers came to be overshadowed by those of the Princeps. He, too, possessed criminal jurisdiction to an unlimited extent. Whenever he desired, he could order that an accused person should be brought before him for trial, and, as time passed on, most cases in which members of the Imperial Civil Service or officers of the army were involved, were heard by the Princeps, or by his præfects. And not only that, but the supreme appeal from the provinces, in cases where the life of a Roman citizen was at stake, lay to Cæsar, and not to the Senate. It is impossible to say at what moment this came to be the recognised custom. Certainly during the reign

of Augustus the Principate was not the universal Court of Appeal from the provinces which it afterwards became. The fact would seem to be that in the matter of criminal jurisdiction, as in most other matters, the dyarchy established by Augustus gradually broke down, owing to the enormous prestige of the Emperors. Consequently, under Emperors like Tiberius or Domitian, the Senate in its judicial capacity merely became an instrument of imperial tyranny, as it gave its verdicts under the eye of the Emperor. On the other hand, the theory of its co-ordinate powers lasted long, and, in normal circumstances, was not felt by the senators themselves to be the hollow sham which it is usually considered to have been. Take, for example, the speech of Otho to his troops when news came of the revolt of Vitellius:

"Vitellius is the master of a few tribes, and has some semblance of an army. We have the Senate. . . . The eternal duration of empire, the peace of nations, my safety and yours, rest on the security of the Senate. This order, which was instituted under due auspices by the Father and Founder of the city, and which has lasted without interruption and without decay from the Kings down to the Emperors, we will bequeath to our descendants, as we have inherited it from our ancestors. For you give the State its senators and the Senate gives it its Princes." *

Such a passage as this, coupled with many others which might be quoted from Tacitus and

* Tacitus Hist. Bk. 1, Chap. 84.

Pliny, and taken in conjunction with the fact that Tiberius, despite his suspicions of the Senate and his slaughter of individual senators, gave to that body the right of electing to all the magistracies which was formerly exercised by the people, shews that the Senate was an integral part in the imperial constitution. Nor would it have suffered so severely at the hands of tyrannical Emperors had it not still been capable of inspiring suspicion and fear. In other words, it was a real, though constantly diminishing, power in the new constitution.

Augustus strove to make the Senate a select assembly of rich men who should be compliant to his will. He also endeavoured to create an aristocratic order, a new senatorial nobility, in the modern sense of the term. He gave the right of wearing the laticlave to the sons of senators and allowed them to attend the meetings of the Senate in order that they might become familiar in their early years with the course of public business. Great importance was attached to purity of birth. The laticlave was granted to no one who could not shew pure Roman descent for three generations; the new marriage laws prohibited the marriage of senators with freed-women or actresses, and they were scrupulously debarred from engaging in commercial pursuits. The army and the Senate — these were the two main careers open to the members of Augustus's new aristocracy. And by the side of the senatorial nobility, Augustus reorganised the equestrian nobility as the second order in the State. Their property qualification was fixed at 400,000 sesterces;

their military character was both revised and revived, and Augustus frequently reviewed their squadrons in person. But the military duties of the order were comparatively unimportant, except in so far as the young knights supplied the legions with mounted officers. The order itself owed its power and influence to other considerations. To it belonged the great capitalists and from its ranks were drawn most of the procurators and præfects who did the main work of the Empire in the imperial provinces. They did not seek for office and dignity at Rome. They preferred, as a class, to let politics alone, and though sometimes rich knights, who possessed the requisite qualification, passed into the senatorial order, the majority of them were well content to remain where they were. For if membership of the Senate conferred additional dignity, it also entailed additional burdens and corresponding expenses, and the typical knight preferred less dignity and more freedom. Not for him, as Cicero had eloquently declaimed, in his speech on behalf of Cluentius, were the *locus*, *auctoritas*, *domi splendor*, *apud exteras nationes nomen et gratia*, *toga prætexta*, *sella curulis*, *fasces*, *imperia*, *provinciæ*, which were rightly enjoyed by the senatorial order in return for the public burdens which they undertook. The knights eschewed these burdens and sacrificed their chance of attaining to these distinctions, in order that they might live their own "tranquil and quiet life" and devote themselves to business. Less was expected of them by the public; they even claimed to be judged by a less exalted standard of moral



REMAINS OF THE ARCH OF AUGUSTUS.

FROM LANCIANI'S "NEW TALES OF OLD ROME."

rectitude. But under Augustus and his successors the knights were the chief pillar of the Principate. They wanted a strong, stable, resolute government, and this the Empire gave them. In return they gave the Empire their loyal support and a constant supply of able and experienced administrators.

When we pass from the senators and the knights to ask how the old popular assemblies of the Republic fared under the new régime, we are confronted once again by the difficulty of reconciling theory with practice. Suetonius declares in the most precise language that Augustus restored the comitia to their ancient status : "*Comitiorum quoque pristinum jus reduxit.*" He increased the penalties against bribery and himself distributed largesse among his own tribesmen on election days that they might not look for bribes from any of the candidates for office. We are also told that he introduced a plan whereby citizens dwelling at a distance might record their votes and have them carried to Rome in ballot boxes in time for the election. Yet nothing is more certain than that Augustus detested popular rule as mob-rule, and that he paved the way for the first act of his successor, Tiberius, who transferred the elections from the comitia to the Senate. There was no room in his scheme for a sovereign people. He might reorganise the comitia in outward form, but he took from them every shred of real power. They still assembled to elect the yearly magistrates, but they rarely had free choice of candidates. The powers of nomination and commendation exercised by the Princeps made the proceedings almost, if

not quite, a solemn farce. The legislative functions of the comitia suffered a like fate. They remained untouched in theory, but the *leges* and *plebiscita* passed by the *populus* and the *plebs* grew rarer and rarer, and no measures were submitted to them, which had not been carefully drafted beforehand by the higher authorities. Thus, though the comitia still survived and the decorous ceremonial attaching to their meetings was even more carefully preserved than it had been under the Republic, their real power had vanished beyond recall, even before the death of Augustus. Nor can it be pretended that this was a loss to the world, especially as regards the legislative authority which once reposed in the sovereign Roman people. The whole idea of the comitia was based upon the conception of a small city-state and was only suitable for the requirements of such a community. Rome itself, to say nothing of the larger Roman world, had outgrown institutions which, according to modern ideas, were only fit for a parish. It was preposterous that the affairs of an Empire should be directed by mass-meetings in the Forum or the Campus Martius. The only practicable reform was to sweep the comitia away.

It followed as a natural result of the destruction of the real powers of the people that the tribunes, who were the special guardians of the popular rights, should suffer a like extinction. They were still elected, but their occupation was gone when the *tribunicia potestas* of the Princeps was the principal weapon in the armoury of absolutism. The tribunate remained a great name, and it doubtless flattered

the pride of many a tribune in Imperial times to remember that the office had once conferred sacrosanctity upon its possessor. Yet, after his year of office was over, he probably agreed with the younger Pliny that its dignity was the shadow of a shade: "*Inanis umbra et sine honore nomen.*" Almost certainly, therefore, the tribunes "knew the change and felt it" more intimately and closely than the other magisterial colleges. With the rest the process of decay was more gradual. The consulship continued to retain its supreme dignity; the prætors still presided over the civil jurisdiction; the quæstors, reduced in number to twenty,—Julius had raised them to forty,—were still the chief financial officials of the treasury; the ædiles, though some of their principal duties were now taken away from them, still performed what may be described as the vestry work of the capital.

But by their side there arose a group of new Imperial offices which speedily overshadowed all the older magistracies, with the possible exception of the consulship. These were the four great Imperial Præfectures, the appointments to which were made by the Princeps alone. The first was the Præfecture of the City, a post usually filled by a man of consular rank. It was his duty to keep public order, and act as Chief Commissioner of Police. Three cohorts, stationed in Rome but without fixed barracks, were placed under his command. He was also a magistrate with both civil and criminal jurisdiction, and he controlled the theatres and the various religious and trading guilds. In the absence of the Princeps

he was responsible for all that took place in the capital and was possessed of practically unlimited powers, though an appeal always lay from his decisions to the Princeps himself. The second great Præfecture was that of the Prætorian Guard. This was the body-guard of the Princeps, a picked force which enjoyed special privileges and pay, and its commander stood high in the Emperor's confidence. During the reign of Augustus little is heard of this office, which subsequently became even more important than the Præfecture of the City when the stability of the throne came to depend upon the loyalty of the Prætorians and their Præfect. The third Præfecture was that of the corn supply. Under the Republic the whole college of ædiles had had charge of this duty, but they had mismanaged it and Julius had appointed special ædiles to look after nothing else. It was found, however, to be beyond the capacity of minor officials and, after sundry experiments, Augustus accepted the responsibility himself and appointed a *Præfectus annonæ*, whose duty it was to see that the corn supply did not fall short, that it was placed on the market at a reasonable price, and that the poorer citizens regularly received their gratuitous doles of wheat. Finally there was the Præfecture of the Watch, *Præfectura Vigilum*. The duties of this official were similar to those of the Præfect of the City, though on a minor scale. His police patrolled the streets at night, and under his direction was placed the newly instituted fire-brigade, divided among the several wards of Rome.

Then, in addition to these four Præfectures, Augustus established a host of minor officials bearing the title of *curatores*. It was, says Suetonius, his policy to create an extensive bureaucracy in order to give as many people as possible some slight share in the administration. *Quoque plures partem administrandæ reipublicæ caperent, nova officia excogitavit.* Hence his Curators of the Italian highways, his Board of Works, his Tiber Conservancy Board, his Water Supply Committee. We may see in the appointment of these curatorships, charged with specific duties, the new spirit of order which Augustus introduced into the administration to secure efficiency and regularity. And there is no possible doubt that the new Boards performed their multifarious duties far more efficiently than they had been performed under the haphazard and ill-defined arrangements of the Republic. The Emperor's motto in municipal, as in imperial, affairs was the one word "Order." So, too, with the reorganisation which Augustus carried out in Italy. He divided the whole peninsula, exclusive of Rome itself, into eleven districts (*regiones*). The authorities are curiously silent as to this reform, but there is good reason to suppose that the new arrangement was made solely for purposes of financial administration and that it did not imply any interference with the local self-government of the districts, though in later times that autonomy was ruthlessly swept away. Certainly for more than a century the Italian cities, *coloniæ*, and *municipia* alike, enjoyed the free exercise of their democratic constitutions long after such liberty

had been lost in Rome. Their comitia continued to be held as before to elect their duumvirs, their ædiles, and their quæstors. The local Senates, continued to control their municipal affairs without interference from the central government, and local life and local patriotism were even more keen and vigorous than they had been in the days of the Republic. Juvenal might jeer at the tattered robes of the ædiles of Ulubræ, but the extraordinary public spirit which pervaded the Italian townships, the zest with which the local magistracies were sought after, and the lavish way in which these magistrates ruined their private fortunes in building temples, baths, and porticoes — the cost of which in our days is thrown upon the rates — disclose an amount of local patriotism which may well awake the envy of the modern municipal reformer. *Honore contentus, impensam remisit* — the open-handed liberality of the Italian magistrate to his native place was not confined to the erection of public buildings but extended in many instances to the repair of the public highways and the improvement of the local water supply. It was only in Rome itself that the Principate destroyed public liberty and public spirit. Elsewhere it stimulated them to renewed vigour.

Such then was the general outline of the new constitution. But the reign of Augustus was long, and the constitution, as fixed in B.C. 27 and again in B.C. 23, was profoundly modified before his death, in A.D. 14. The scheme of co-ordinated authority between Princeps and Senate proved unworkable in practice, simply because the two powers did not

start on equal terms. Insensibly the prestige of the Princeps and his officers tended to thrust into the background the prestige of the Senate and its officers. The strong increased in strength; the weak grew weaker. Before Augustus died the Principate had ceased to be a magistracy within the Republic, for the Princeps had founded a dynasty, and the Empire was an accomplished fact. This was not acknowledged in theory, as the attitude of Tiberius towards the Senate and that of the Senate towards Tiberius clearly proved, when each waited for the other to make a declaration of policy and feared to commit a false move. But practically the Senate admitted that the dyarchy had fallen to the ground and that there could be but one real master in the Roman world, namely, the heir of Augustus and the lord of the legions.

Augustus received the *tribunicia potestas* in B.C. 23. At that moment his popularity was at its height and it remained unimpaired for many years. There were, indeed, a few Republicans left who regretted the change and were rash enough to intrigue against him. But throughout his entire reign Augustus was little troubled by conspiracies. Fannius Cæpio and Licinius Murena, who plotted against him in B.C. 22, were condemned in their absence and shortly afterwards put to death. Three years later, Egnatius Rufus, Plautius Rufus, and Lucius Paulus engaged in a similarly hopeless conspiracy, and were crushed with equal promptitude by the Consul Lucius Sentius. The only other serious conspiracy with which Augustus had to deal was hatched twenty

years later by Cnæus Cornelius Cinna. Augustus not only pardoned his enemy but restored him to favour, and conferred upon him the consulship. "You may be assured," said the Emperor in addressing the culprit, "that it is not I alone who stand in your way if your ambition is to fill my place; neither the Paulli nor the Cossi, neither the Fabii nor the Servilii, will allow you to exercise domination over them." However, the popularity of Augustus is best shewn not by the negative evidence that there were but few conspiracies against him — that is testimony rather to his vigilance — but by the extraordinary manifestation of public feeling which took place in the year B.C. 22. No sooner had he lain down the consulship than Rome was visited by famine and pestilence, while the Tiber overflowed its banks and washed away a number of temples in the low-lying parts of the city. This seems to have been interpreted by the superstitious citizens as proof that the gods were displeased at Augustus's retirement from the consulship, and a tumult followed, in which the people snatched the fasces from the lictors of the Consuls and threatened to burn down the Curia unless the senators agreed to appoint the popular idol dictator for life. Then followed a most curious scene. For Augustus confronted the mob, threw off his toga from his shoulders, and, with bared breast and bended knee, deprecated the honour which they sought to thrust upon him. The dictatorship, he said, was a hated office which had been solemnly abolished because of the tyrannous uses to which it had been put; would

they force it upon one whose sole care was to be the servant of the State? The utmost he would consent to accept was to take personal charge of the corn supply, in order to relieve the existing distress, and to appoint—for the last time—two citizen-censors, who, under his direction, should set the moral affairs of the Roman people in order. The scene was merely a solemn piece of hypocrisy so far as Augustus was concerned; but it at least proved that the people looked up to him as their only possible ruler and protector.

An equally significant episode took place a few months later while Augustus was in Sicily. At the consular comitia for the ensuing year the people elected him Consul and gave him Lollius as a colleague. When Augustus refused the honour and ordered a new election, the intrigues of the rival candidates led to public disturbances, which necessitated the return of Agrippa to Rome. A similar tumult arose at the following elections when the people again insisted upon choosing Augustus with Sentius Saturninus, and, upon his declining the honour a second time, the disorder in Rome became so serious that the Senate declared the State to be in danger, and passed the usual formula clothing Sentius with supreme authority. Sentius, however, was too wary to assume powers which might seem treasonable in the eyes of Augustus and he induced the senators to rescind their resolution and send envoys to Augustus to ask him to help them out of their difficulty. Sharply rebuking them for their incapacity to keep the peace in Rome, Augustus

consented to nominate a second Consul to act with Sentius and the storm blew over. But it left the Senate weaker and the Princeps stronger than before. Augustus, on his return from Asia in B.C. 19, instituted the Præfecture of the City as a definite office, and thenceforward, even in the Emperor's absence, there were no disturbances in Rome.



CHAPTER XII

AUGUSTUS AS A SOCIAL AND RELIGIOUS REFORMER

ROME, indeed, had good reason to keep the peace. Augustus's yoke lay heavy upon no single class. Among the old oligarchical families, there were comparatively few who possessed either the obstinacy of a Cato or the philosophical Republicanism of a Brutus. These remained sullenly aloof; the rest acquiesced. The knights accepted the altered conditions with enthusiasm. And if the people had lost their ancient political liberty they gave no sign that they lamented the loss.

It is customary to denounce the Roman populace of the time of Augustus as degenerate and degraded, as "the dregs of Romulus" and as "a starveling and contemptible mob." But exaggeration is natural to the partisan. Rome was a vast cosmopolitan city, just as is London or New York. If it was "a sink of the nations," so are these. Like them, it had its quota of destitute aliens and pauper citizens, wretched beings who herded together in the slums and whose lives were sordid, brutish, and mean. This is a universal, if not an inevitable, feature of

all metropolitan cities, and the system of slavery, upon which the Roman civilisation was based, doubtless intensified the evil. The pauper Romans had no more exalted views of the moral dignity of political freedom than any other populace. Provided they were fed and amused, and their prejudices were respected, they were willing enough to accept a master who, "though he ruled them, yet concealed the rule." To keep them in good humour was the policy of Augustus and all his successors. But Augustus did not originate this policy. Their own leaders and the popular party had long before begun the grain distributions which, more than anything else, had tended to create a lazy proletariate. The spectacles, the games, and the theatres were, in their origin, Republican and not Imperial institutions. These were now celebrated on a more magnificent scale than ever, for the appetite comes in eating, and the citizens who thronged the free seats of the amphitheatres grew to consider their amusements the most serious occupation of their idle lives.

The demoralising effects of the corn distributions, the periodical largesses of money, the continual public festivals, games, and entertainments in the circus and the theatres are beyond denial. Augustus was sensible of the evil which they wrought, but he soon realised that it was impossible to eradicate it. He confessed on one occasion that he had entertained the idea of abolishing for ever the public distributions of corn, because the fields of Italy were going out of cultivation, but that he had abandoned it be-

cause he knew that, when he was gone, someone would be certain to reintroduce the practice in order to gain popularity. He found himself obliged to make repeated largesses, varying in amount from 250 to 400 sesterces per head, and he gave even boys under eleven the right to participate therein. But when the citizens clamoured for a largesse which had not been promised, he issued an edict sharply reprimanding their insolence; when they complained of the scarcity and high price of wine he reminded them that his son-in-law, Agrippa, had provided an adequate water supply and that they had, therefore, no excuse for being thirsty. Nevertheless, the process of degeneration was painfully rapid. Thousands of citizens thought it no shame to receive daily their doles of food, which they fetched in baskets from the houses of the rich patrons to whom they attached themselves. They might be ragged, but they looked down with supreme contempt upon the freedmen who formed the shop-keeping classes. Their pride was unwounded by a charity which in their eyes carried with it no pauper taint.

Augustus did his best to restore a healthier public feeling. He devoted his whole energies to the task of recreating the old public spirit of Rome and identifying it with the maintenance of the new constitution. And he began by making the metropolitan city itself worthy of the Empire of which it was the centre. During his reign Rome was in great measure rebuilt. It was his famous boast that he found it a city of brick and left it a city of marble: "*Urbem marmoream se relinquere quam latericiam accepisset.*"

The boast was not an idle one. His Board of Public Works enjoyed no rest. The number of great public buildings erected under his supervision will compare favourably with the record of any monarch, either before or after his time. First and foremost was the new Forum. The old one, even with the additions made to it by Julius, was far too small to accomodate the crowd of citizens and the courts of law which held their sittings within it. Augustus now greatly extended it, but even he was confronted by so many difficulties in appropriating the ground required that the north-eastern corner had to be adapted to the irregular outlines of the adjoining streets. In the Julian Forum stood the stately temple to Venus Genetrix, commenced in fulfilment of a vow made during the battle of Pharsalus and completed by Augustus after Cæsar's death. In the new Forum there arose the magnificent temple to Mars the Avenger, vowed by Augustus himself during the battle of Philippi, and regarded by him with special veneration. It was in this building that the Senate henceforth met when the subject of debate was either the prosecution of a war or the bestowal of a triumph; it was from this hallowed spot that the provincial governors started to take up their commands, and hither that conquering generals brought their trophies of victory. But this was by no means the only temple which owed its foundation to Augustus. He erected the temple to Thundering Jupiter on the Capitol to commemorate his narrow escape from being struck by lightning in Spain, and the great temple of Apollo on the Palatine as a



TEMPLE OF MARS ULTOR.

FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY ALINARI.

thank-offering for "the crowning mercy" of Actium. This, which was one of the earliest marble temples of Rome, was filled with the choicest examples of Grecian art. Magnificent colonnades connected it with two adjoining marble halls, containing the first public library of the city, wherein were placed the writings of all the best Greek and Latin authors.

Augustus's own residence stood upon the Palatine. He had been born in his father's modest mansion on this hill, which contained so many memorials of early Rome, and, after spending a few years in a dwelling near the Forum, he returned to the Palatine, and occupied the house which had previously belonged to Hortensius, Cicero's great rival at the bar. There he remained more than forty years, and the simple tastes of the master of the world did not disdain a mansion which made no pretensions to style and magnificence, and could not boast a single marble pillar or elaborately tesselated floor. When it was destroyed by fire in B. C. 6, the citizens insisted that it should be rebuilt upon a scale more consonant with the dignity of its owner's position. We are told that Augustus refused to accept more than a single denarius from each individual subscriber, and, if the statement of Dion Cassius is to be believed, when the palace was completed he allowed the public free access thereto, and affected to regard it as belonging to the State rather than to himself. Close at hand, too, rose the magnificent palace of Livia, chosen by Tiberius for his own residence when he succeeded to the throne, and the Palatine thus became indissolubly associated

with the Imperial House. Other public works, which were carried out by Augustus but were dedicated in the names of members of his family, were the portico and basilica of Caius and Lucius, his grandsons, the porticoes of the Empress Livia and his sister Octavia, and the handsome theatre of Marcellus, which contained seats for twenty thousand spectators.

Augustus encouraged others to follow his example. The erection of a fine public building was a certain passport to his favour. Marcus Philippus, his kinsman, raised a temple to Hercules; Lucius Cornificius to Diana, and Munatius Plancus to Saturn. Cornelius Balbus gave the city a theatre with accommodation for eleven thousand spectators; Asinius Pollio built a hall which he boldly dedicated to Liberty; Statilius Taurus lavished his resources upon a splendid amphitheatre. But the chief patron of architecture, who rivalled even the Emperor himself, was Marcus Agrippa. He gave Rome magnificent public baths on the Greek model, adapted to Roman requirements, which served as the pattern for the later baths built by Titus and Caracalla. They were profusely decorated with the finest sculpture and paintings, and the benefactor not only constructed the baths, but also the aqueduct, known as the Aqua Virgo, which supplied them with water. Close by he had raised the glorious Pantheon; and near at hand was the temple of Poseidon, founded to commemorate his many naval victories, and containing, like the Pantheon, the noblest statuary which the times were capable



THEATRE OF MARCELLUS.

FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY ALINARI.

of producing. These three buildings were the principal gifts of Agrippa, but they by no means represent the full extent of his well-directed generosity. The architecture of Rome in Augustus's day is a subject beyond the scope of this work, but the few buildings we have enumerated will suffice to show that the reconstruction and adornment of the city were carried on without intermission. Nor did Augustus neglect works of public utility. The embankments of the Tiber, the repair of the great roads, and the provision of new aqueducts, were as carefully attended to as the plans for new temples and new theatres. He voluntarily took upon himself the expense of keeping in repair the Flaminian Way as far as Ariminum, while the charge of the other highroads was divided among those of his generals who were accorded the honours of a triumph, to be defrayed by them from the sale of the spoils which they had taken in war. In short, Augustus sought to make Rome outwardly worthy of her great imperial position, and to foster the pride which the Romans took in the Queen of Cities. The home of the race which wore the toga was to excite the admiration of the world; the grandeur of its public buildings was to serve as proof of its majesty, its prosperity, and its permanence.

The grandeur of Rome as it rose anew into fresh life after the long series of civil wars—this, too, was the constant theme of the poets whom Augustus gathered round him. He wished to convince the world that his marvellous success was due to the direct favour of Heaven, that the régime he had

established was the preordained event to which Rome and the Romans had been slowly moving during the long centuries of their history, that the blessing of the gods rested upon him and his work. We need not doubt his sincerity. All things in his case had worked together for good, and when he stood forward as the champion of the old religious spirit which was part and parcel of the Roman temperament, he came nearer to absolute sincerity than he did in most of his political institutions. The restoration of the Roman religion became one of the ruling passions of his life, not only because he knew that the Empire he was founding would be all the stronger for resting upon a religious basis and for the support of a religious sanction, but because he himself was religiously minded. We have seen how he raised magnificent new temples to his special tutelar divinities in recognition of their powerful and timely assistance. Throughout his reign he was always ready to head a subscription list for the repair of an ancient fane. "*Templorum positor, templorum sancte repostor*"—thus Ovid addresses him in the *Fasti* as the founder of new shrines and the restorer of the old, not in Rome alone, but throughout Italy and the provinces. The blessing of the gods was a real thing to Augustus, an object to be secured at any cost. He had allowed Lepidus to retain the dignified office of Chief Pontiff until his death in B.C. 12; then he himself assumed the Pontificate and became the active head both of Church and State. In all matters connected with religion there was no one more conservative or more na-



THE PANTHEON.

FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY ALINARI.

tional than he. While tolerating the alien cults and new-fangled superstitions which had invaded Rome, he reserved his most liberal patronage for what was venerable and of native growth. He collected the prophetical books, both Latin and Greek, and burnt them all, keeping none but the Sibylline, which he placed in two golden coffers under the pedestal of the statue of the Palatine Apollo. He increased the number of the sacred colleges, added to their dignities, swelled their endowments, and bestowed marks of special favour upon the Vestal Virgins. Ancient priestly foundations and ceremonies which had fallen upon evil days, such as the Augury of the Public Welfare, the Priesthood of Jupiter, the Festival of the Lupercalia, and the Secular and Compitalician Games, he refounded and reorganised. He restored the worship of the Lares, the minor deities of the street and the home, by raising three hundred little shrines at the crossways and street corners of the city, and by ordering that twice a year, in spring and summer, their modest altars should be adorned with flowers. Due honour to the gods, both great and small, such was the cardinal principle of Augustus, in dealing with religion.

And he had his reward, for the religion of Rome struck new roots deep into the life of the Roman people. It is one of the strangest facts in history that just at the period when there was born in Palestine the founder of Christianity, which was destined to destroy Paganism, there should have taken place so marked a revival of the old religion. Its genuineness is beyond argument. We have only to

take note of the number of ruined temples, of the decay of the sacerdotal colleges, of the contemptuous and sceptical attitude of Cicero towards the State religion to see how low it had fallen in the last days of the Republic. It is true that when Cicero refers to religion in his public speeches he sounds a different note and speaks with sonorous, yet purely formal, respect of the gods of Rome. But in his philosophical writings he is a sceptic of the sceptics; in his letters religion scarce finds a mention. If he needs consolation in distress, or hope in time of trouble he does not turn to the altars of the gods for comfort or courage. But in the early days of the Empire a profound change takes place. The gods enjoy a new lease of life. Men not only worship, they almost believe. They are prosperous again and they joyously lead victims to the altars.

This was not the work of Augustus alone, though it was Augustus who had lifted the deep depression which had settled down upon the people and restored gaiety and happiness to a world exhausted by war. It may be doubted whether he could have succeeded single-handed; whether the poet did not achieve more than the statesman. That poet, of course, was Virgil. His wonderful and instantaneous popularity may be explained in part by the exquisite music and cadences of his verse, by the charm and graces of his style, and by the dignity of his theme. But the great secret of the power which he wielded over his contemporaries and over the ages which were to follow lies not so much in this as

in his moral earnestness and in the spirit of humanity and religion which permeates his work. To regard him simply as a court poet, because he laboured in the same field as Augustus and furthered his projects, because he enjoyed the Imperial favour and wove into his poetry passages in which he eulogised the Imperial House, is to fail to understand both the man and his work. It was Horace who was the typical court poet, the debonair man of the world who could write religious and birthday odes to order, in polished stanzas which appealed to the ear, but not to the heart. Virgil stood on a loftier pedestal. Deep religion and intense burning patriotism—in these lie the secret of Virgil's influence. And in his view they were inextricably intertwined. He looked back with regret to the bygone days when men lived simpler lives, and not only feared, but walked with, the gods.

"Fortunatus et ille deos qui novit agrestes,
Panaque, Silvanumque senem, Nymphasque sorores.

In one sense the *Georgics* may be regarded as a political pamphlet, inasmuch as Augustus had already raised the cry of "Back to the Land," and was seeking to revive agriculture throughout Italy. He did not succeed. He failed to stem the influx of the rural population into the towns, just as every succeeding statesman who has sought to grapple with the same problem has failed also.

"A bold peasantry, a country's pride,
Once lost, can never be supplied."

The causes lay too deep for remedy, and the working of economic laws could not be suspended by the publication of an edict or a didactic poem. The old rural life was moribund, if not dead. The import of foreign corn, distributed either gratuitously or at an artificially reduced price, killed Italian agriculture. Yet, the *Georgics* had their due effect upon men's beliefs. Universally read and universally admired as they were, they contributed their part to the religious revival in the country districts. They were rather a tract for the times than a political pamphlet, a reminder to the farmer of the supreme dignity of his labour and of the sure blessing that would rest upon him if he remembered the gods. "Above all, venerate the gods"—"*imprimis venerare deos*"—that was the solemn charge of the *Georgics*. And the *Æneid* again was essentially a religious and national poem. The gods of Virgil's Olympus are different from those of Homer's. They are more idealised, less fleshly, less mortal in their passions and their vices. There is a subtle touch of mysticism in the Roman poet which is absent from the Greek. Virgil leaves them as more shadowy beings, more remote from human affairs, more worthy of reverence because less frankly conceived on the human pattern. They rule the affairs of men in accordance with the decrees of fate, and the supreme virtue man can show is piety, that is to say, instant obedience to the divine will, when declared, and due observance of all religious ceremonies. And the reward of such piety? Clearly this was manifest in the continued favour of Heaven which had made

Rome the mistress of the world. It would require a lengthy analysis of the poem to shew how Virgil expressed in his verse his conception of the duties as well as of the privileges of empire and his lofty view of Rome's civilising mission; how by his masterly employment of local colour and local legends he sought to bind together Rome and Italy in one common patriotism; how he crystallised in the Sixth Book the best thoughts of his time about the immortality of the soul and life after death, and grafted them on to the national religion; and how skilfully he represented Augustus as the lineal heir and descendant of the hero of his epic. The Sibylline Books might continue to be the Law and the Prophets of Paganism, but Virgil had caused a new spirit to pass over men's ideas of the gods. The old religion glowed with a new life. The forms of certain of the deities whom they worshipped might be grotesque; the legends puerile. But a loftier and nobler conception of the Divinity and of worship came to be taught by the philosophers, who from this time forward combined religion with philosophy, instead of elevating the latter to the detriment of the former. This was the fruit of the new revival begun by Augustus and Virgil, and thus, when Christianity came to grips with Paganism, it found existing by the side of the official and State religion a real and living religious spirit which expressed itself in a language similar to its own. Augustus might be disheartened at the open profligacy of the capital and the irreligion of the upper classes, but the revival of religion throughout the Empire was none the less real.

This religious revival, however, assumed another and equally important shape. It encouraged the growth of Cæsar-worship. This has frequently been summarily dismissed as though it were merely a fantastic and abnormal form of worship, foisted upon an incredulous world by Augustus and his successors. Nothing could be further from the truth. It was, on the contrary, in its inception an essentially natural development which Augustus at first sought to repress rather than to foster. It started in the East, where the Greeks, to shew their gratitude and loyalty, raised temples in his honour, just as they had raised them to the pro-Consuls of the Republic. Augustus refused deification while he still lived, but he permitted his Eastern subjects to associate his *numen* with that of the city of Rome, and temples were accordingly raised "to Rome and Augustus." This came perilously near to deification, but the distinction which seems so slight to the modern eye was then considered real. The fact, however, that Augustus forbade even this association of his own personal *genius* with that of Rome in the capital and throughout Italy shews that the idea was un-Roman. He melted down the silver statues which had been erected to him in the peninsula and with the proceeds dedicated some golden tripods to the Palatine Apollo. But though the deification or quasi-deification of a living man might be un-Roman, the apotheosis of the dead wounded the religious susceptibilities of none. If Romulus after his death had become divine, why should not the second founder of Rome be equally assured of a place

among the immortals and have an equal tract of sky allotted to him? Thus when Augustus permitted a temple to be raised to Divus Julius, he was preparing the way for his own apotheosis after death. Nor was this repugnant to the religious instinct of his time. To a people accustomed to the cult of ancestor-worship and hero-worship, the immediate apotheosis of the dead ruler or statesman was easy of belief, and if in the twentieth century so large a proportion of mankind see nothing incredible in the canonisation of a saint or in the idealism which speaks of "the sacred Majesty of Kings," we need hardly be surprised that the people of the first century transformed their dead Emperors into gods.

The Crown is the strongest bond of union between the component parts of the British Empire to-day; the Emperor was the strongest bond of union between the component parts of the Empire of Rome. The feeling grew in intensity from year to year, and Augustus eventually recognised that the identification of himself with Rome and the Empire for purposes of public worship, the close union, that is to say, of Church and State, was a source of incalculable strength to the Principate. He would have failed in statesmanship, therefore, had he not encouraged this idea and given it definite shape. What stouter link could be forged between the throne and the army upon which it rested than that of religion? "It is religion," said Seneca, "which keeps the army together." "*Primum militiæ vinculum est religio.*" The altar of the reigning

Emperor, which stood in every Roman camp, represented more to the legionary than the altar of the king of the gods. So, too, in the provinces the altar of Augustus became the focus of national life. It was there that the provincial diets met and offered sacrifice to the dead Emperors and incense to the *numen* of the living Prince. It was there that they gathered on the Emperor's birthday and prayed for his safety and that of Rome. Rightly considered, Cæsar-worship was far from being a degrading superstition. The new cult, with its priests and high priests chosen from the leading families, was in its essence a public acknowledgment of the debt which the provinces owed to the Empire, a sincere expression of loyalty to a political principle. The Emperor of the day might be a bloodthirsty tyrant or an odious wretch, but the provincials never questioned the blessings which the Empire had conferred upon them.

During his lifetime the *genius* of Augustus was principally associated in Rome and Italy with the worship of the Lares which he had taken pains to revive, and the old *magistri vicorum* took the name of *magistri Augustales.* Throughout Italy the cult spread with amazing rapidity. A new religious order arose, known as the *ordo Augustalium*, whose members were not priests and exercised no priestly functions, for they seem to have been principally composed of freedmen. Yet they were granted certain insignia of office, and membership was eagerly sought after, for it gave the rich freedman the *dignitas* which the accident of birth had denied to him.



HEAD OF AUGUSTUS AS FRATER ARVALIS.

FROM LANCIANI'S "NEW TALES OF OLD ROME."

Closely connected with this religious revival was Augustus's policy of social reform. Here again we see the essential conservatism of the man and his strenuous endeavour to restore the morals and the manners of an earlier and more austere age. His marriage laws and sumptuary laws were all directed to this one great aim, and reform was badly needed. Among the upper classes of Rome the sanctity of marriage was scarcely respected. Irregular unions had become increasingly common. Men had recourse to divorce on the slightest and flimsiest pretexts, and marriage itself was regarded by a large section of the community as a burden and a tie. The old domestic life of the Romans had gone utterly out of fashion, with disastrous results to public morals and to the birth-rate. The lines of Horace,

> "Fecunda culpæ sæcula nuptias
> Primum inquinavere et genus et domos;
> Hoc fonte derivata clades
> In patriam populumque fluxit,"

did not exaggerate the truth. The women of the highest society had thrown off the restraints previously imposed upon them, and if the careers of Sempronia, the friend of Catiline, and of Clodia, the sister of the tribune, were at all typical of their class, they had turned their newly won freedom to the most shameless uses. Roman society, in a word, was corrupt and vicious. Even in the days of the Republic it had been found necessary to legislate for the encouragement of marriage and its fruits, and Julius had issued a series of enactments on the

subject. Augustus increased their stringency. A law was passed making it obligatory on all citizens of a certain age to marry. They were given three years' grace in which to choose their wives, but the law met with so much passive opposition that a further extension of two years' liberty was permitted. Senators were forbidden to form legitimate marriages with freed-women; celibacy was penalised by incapacity to profit by bequests, and if a union proved childless the husband was only allowed to receive one half of any legacies which might be left to him. On the other hand, the father of three children received special privileges in the shape of the remission of part of his taxes, exemption from jury service, a good seat in the theatre, and priority of election in standing for public office. Yet, in spite of these extraordinary bounties on domesticity, the desired result was not obtained, and both Augustus and his successors strove in vain to overcome the growing disinclination of the upper classes of Rome to undertake parental responsibilities. The laws were constantly evaded. Men married and then immediately divorced their wives. When it was ordained that such persons should remarry within a specified time, the reluctant Benedicts sought to escape the meshes of the law by entering into nominal marriage contracts with young children. Thoughout his reign Augustus was continually amending the marriage laws, and for the most part with meagre success. Nor was he more successful by making adultery a criminal offence punishable by heavy fine or banishment to an island

Such a weapon could only be employed in exceedingly gross cases where there was flagrant public scandal.

His sumptuary laws fared little better, though he set his people a far better personal example in this respect than he did in the matter of morals. He tried to check luxurious living and extravagance in the building and decoration of private mansions. He sought, in the spirit of seventeenth-century Puritanism, to set bounds to the caprices of fashion in women's dress. But he might as well have preached to the winds and the waves. His motives were excellent, but Roman society was too steeped in corruption and luxury for him to be able to effect any radical improvement, much less a complete transformation. Moreover, he had given Rome a court, or the beginnings of a court, and the archaic virtues of simplicity and plain living rarely flourish in a courtly atmosphere. He was thus committed to an unavailing struggle to reconcile two almost irreconcilable ideals, and the deadliest blows were, as we shall see, dealt him by members of his own household.

Similarly, he attempted to check the licence which prevailed in the theatres and at the public shows. He forbade boys from taking part in the Lupercalia; at the Secular Games he issued an edict that no young person should attend the evening performances unless in the company of an elder relative. At the gladiatorial shows he restricted women to the upper parts of the amphitheatre; to the athletic festivals he denied them entrance altogether. That

they resented this interference with their liberty is shewn by the fact that he was obliged to issue an edict expressing his disapproval of their flocking to the theatres before the fifth hour and sacrificing their siesta in order to get a front place. Augustus carried his passion for order and class privilege into the theatre, and issued the most detailed instructions as to the allocation of the respective blocks of seats. And if he insisted upon order among the audience he made the same demand from the actors, especially from the Greek pantomimists, who had been wont to indulge in the free use of "gags" and political allusions. An actor named Stephanio was beaten with rods publicly in three theatres for bringing on to the stage a Roman matron with her hair cut to make her look like a boy; another was banished from Italy for pointing with his finger to a member of the audience who had hissed him.

It is certainly strange that Augustus, who saw clearly enough that the theatres and games occupied far too much of the attention of the people and were fast becoming their most engrossing interest, should yet have been their unfailing patron. One can understand his frequent revival of the "Game of Troy," in which the best-born youths of Rome took part and performed a number of evolutions on horseback. This was a good training-school for the future officers of the army, and it is the more extraordinary that he abolished it because Asinius Pollio bitterly complained in the Senate that it was a dangerous exhibition, instancing the case of one of his young relatives who had been thrown from

his horse and broken his leg. The incident brings out very clearly the decay of martial exercises among the upper classes and their increasing tendency to restrict their active share in sports to that of watching paid professionals in the arena. But we might almost say that Augustus adopted the rôle of public caterer for the people's amusements. He boasts in the *Monumentum Ancyranum* the number of shows he had provided for their delectation, as though his generosity in this respect constituted a lasting title to fame. We are told by Suetonius that he outstripped all his predecessors in the frequency, variety and magnificence of his spectacles, that he gave four entertainments in his own name and twenty-three in the names of other magistrates, who were either absent from Rome or whose means were inadequate to bear the expense. Suetonius goes on to describe how, in addition to the wild-beast hunts, the athletic festivals, and the great naval show held in a specially constructed lake, he got together special bands of players to amuse the people ; how, whenever a rare beast was brought to Rome, such as a rhinoceros, a Bengal tiger, or a snake of extraordinary size, Augustus took care that the public should be given a free view of it ; and with what scrupulous regularity he attended the shows himself. If he was ill, or public business was too pressing, he apologised for his absence and appointed a deputy to take his place as president. And, whenever he was present, he always feigned an engrossing interest in the performance, remembering that Julius had given rise to adverse comment because he had read

letters and transacted business in the theatre. It would seem from this curious passage that the people resented their ruler working while they were enjoying themselves, as though such seriousness contained a veiled reproof of their idleness. To us such a rôle as this seems hardly consistent with that of a serious statesman and ardent religious reformer, who was anxious to lead back his people to a simpler life, to check luxury, and to repress vice. Probably Augustus would have justified his conduct by saying that these games were part of the public life of Rome, that they possessed the sanction of antiquity, and that all State functions ought to be on a scale commensurate with the dignity of the Imperial city. His ideal, seen in his lavish expenditure upon the public buildings and temples of Rome, was that everything connected with the State should be imposing and magnificent, while the private individual should display an almost Puritanical simplicity in conduct, dress, and domestic life. Such an ideal may be intellectually intelligible, but it certainly was not translated into action by the Roman people of Augustus's day. They refused to draw so subtle a distinction.

Many have thought that Augustus set himself to amuse the people in order to make them forget the political liberty which they had lost, that he debauched them of deliberate purpose in order that he might keep them quiet. There is no doubt that the shows which he provided were extraordinarily popular and that the dregs of Rome, like the dregs of any other great city, ancient or modern, fawned upon

the bounteous hand which fed them and pleasantly filled up their idle moments. But we may certainly acquit the Emperor of any such Machiavellian purpose, which was contrary to the general trend of his character and policy. If Augustus was sincere in anything, he was sincere in his passion for order, and for that quality of *gravitas* which differentiated the Roman from the Greek. Innovator as he was in a thousand ways, he was always an innovator *malgré lui;* he was at heart a disciple of Cato though he was grand-nephew and adopted son of Julius. Augustus set out with the fixed determination to put back the hands of the clock, in all that related to domestic life, to morals, and to religion. In Rome, at any rate, the times were too strong for him.





CHAPTER XIII

THE ORGANISATION OF THE PROVINCES

FROM Rome and Italy we turn to the ampler world of the Roman Empire, and are at once confronted with the cardinal reform introduced by Augustus in 27 B.C., when he divided the provinces between the Principate and the Senate. The principle upon which the division was made is succinctly laid down by Suetonius, who says that the Emperor took for himself the more powerful provinces which could neither conveniently nor safely be administered by magistrates holding office only for a single year: "*Validiores provincias et quas annuis magistratuum imperiis regi nec facile nec tutum erat, ipse suscepit.*" In other words, he chose those which required the presence of troops to keep them in subjection, and the great frontier provinces which came in contact with barbarism; those which lay outside the path of the storm he handed over to the Senate. Africa,— which still retained a legion, — Bætica, Asia, Sicily, Dalmatia, Macedonia, Achaia, Crete and Cyrene, Bithynia and Pontus, Sardinia and Corsica, were placed in the latter category. Of these Dalmatia was transferred to the Emperor in B. C. II, on the

outbreak of the Pannonian wars, and Sardinia and Corsica in A. D. 6, probably to enable the Emperor to exercise better control over the grain supplies. But the Senate had been more than compensated for the loss of these by the acquisition in B. C. 22 of Gallia Narbonensis, and Cyprus. The remaining provinces were directly administered by the Emperor. Lusitania and Tarraconensis in Spain; Aquitania, Lugdunensis, and Belgica in Gaul; the two Germanic provinces on the Rhine, formed towards the close of his reign; the various Danubian provinces and procuratorships; Cilicia; the great eastern frontier province of Syria; and Egypt, which belonged to a special category of its own — all these were entirely removed from the sphere of the Senate's influence.

With the senatorial provinces Augustus interfered as little as possible. Their governors continued to be chosen by lot from among the ex-consuls and ex-prætors of five years' standing, until in A.D. 5 this method of selection—a clumsy device which had always given rise to endless intrigue and chicanery —was abolished. Owing to their wealth and importance, Asia and Africa seem to have been reserved for men of consular rank, but Augustus, lavish as ever in the grant of such distinctions as carried dignity without power, ordained that all senatorial governors should rank as pro-consuls, even though they had never held the consulship. Thus the ruler of the most insignificant province was attended by his lictors with their axes and rods, and enjoyed the right of assuming the pro-consular insignia on

passing beyond the Pomœrium. But if his outward dignities were thus scrupulously maintained his real power had become greatly diminished. Except in the case of Africa, no senatorial governor commanded an army. His freedom of action was curtailed in a number of indirect ways. He was no longer at liberty to plunder the provincials at discretion. His receipt of a fixed and adequate salary left him no excuse for levying exactions upon the natives, and there is good reason to believe that the senatorial commissioners, or *legati*, sent to accompany him and keep watch over his doings, were much more carefully selected than they had been in Republican days. Even his quæstor, his deputy and finance officer, whose chief duty was to look after the payment of the tribute and to see that neither the provincials nor the governor robbed the State, now bore the title of *quæstor pro-prætore*, and to him were assigned definite judicial functions, which limited the old absolute irresponsibility of the provincial governor.

In the imperial provinces, on the other hand, the governors were merely the representatives of the Princeps—*legati Cæsaris pro-prætore*. One and all bore the title of pro-prætor, even though they had passed the curule chair. Answerable for their conduct to the Emperor alone, they remained in their commands at his sole discretion. Thus while the system of annual governorships still prevailed in the senatorial provinces, it became no uncommon thing for the ruler of an imperial province to stay for a long term of years in his command, a fact

which tended strongly to efficient administration. These imperial governors were attended by procurators who performed the duties of quæstor and eventually became persons of hardly less importance than the governors themselves. Sometimes, indeed, the procurator was actually the governor of the district in which he was placed. This was the case in Judæa, when that country was attached to Syria, and in Rhætia, Noricum, Epirus, and Thrace. Occasionally, indeed, the procurators were under the general supervision of the pro-prætor of the adjoining province, but for most practical purposes they held independent commands.

Beyond the sweeping reform involved by this division of the provinces into two separate and distinct classes, Augustus did not introduce any violent changes into the provincial administration itself. He simply took over the Republican system and saw that it was worked in an efficient manner, his aim being rather to destroy its abuses than to recast its general character. What he did was to set the provinces upon a business footing. One of the principal steps taken towards this end was the completion of the great ordnance survey begun by Julius. The four leading geometers of the day, Zenodoxus, Theodotus, Polycletus, and Didymus, were engaged for nearly twenty-five years in visiting every corner of the Empire and preparing a new map, whereon were shewn the configuration of each province, with its principal roads and towns, and a minute description of the character of the soil. A copy of this was painted or engraved by Agrippa on the

walls of his portico at Rome, while the originals were carefully kept in the Roman treasury and constituted the official record upon which the provinces were assessed. In addition to this *orbis pictus*, or painted world, Augustus carried out a census in Gaul, Spain, and Syria, and the probabilities are that the same course was pursued in each province, with periodical revisions every few years. The census papers shew that a careful inventory was made for the purpose of the land tax, which was the most profitable source of Roman revenue. Julius Cæsar had already abolished in B.C. 48 the system of farming the tithe, which had been the cause of endless extortion, especially in the Asiatic provinces. The *tributum soli*, or land-tax, was now apparently collected by the province itself and paid over to the quæstor or to the procurator direct, without the intervention of the publicanus, or middleman. The operations of the latter were not indeed wholly dispersed with, for the publicanus still continued to farm the revenues obtained from the *portoria* (the customs and octroi) and from the mines and quarries which belonged to the State. Yet these revenues were no longer sold at public auction, but were leased by the treasury officials at Rome.

There is no reason to believe that the burden of taxation was unduly heavy. The chief direct taxes were the *tributum soli* and the *tributum capitis*, the former a land-tax, paid either in money or in grain, and the latter a personal tax on property or income. The principal indirect tax was the customs, which varied in amount in different provinces. In

addition to these, there were other imposts, such as the four per cent. tax on all inheritances, the five per cent. on the enfranchisement of every slave, the one per cent. on all commodities sold by auction or in open market, and the two per cent. on the sale of slaves. The revenue derived from the *ager publicus*, or State domains in Italy, had dwindled almost to the vanishing point, and the fact that Augustus practically introduced no new taxes to meet the enormously increased public expenditure is a striking proof at once of the prosperity which attended his rule and of the greater honesty of the public officials. In Cicero's time we hear only of the provincials as being ground down by the rapacity of their governors, while the exchequer was constantly empty; in the reign of Augustus commerce had revived with a bound. The system of a double exchequer seems clumsy to modern ideas, but it flowed naturally from the division of the provinces. The *Ærarium Saturni*, controlled by senatorial officers, continued to receive all the revenues from the public domains and the senatorial provinces; the *Ærarium militare*, or military treasury, depended mainly upon the one per cent. tax on the sale of commodities; while into the Emperor's *Fiscus* flowed all the revenues from the imperial provinces.

Augustus spent public money freely upon the provinces for imperial purposes. It is impossible, for example, to compute the enormous sums which must have been expended in the construction of the great military roads which led to the frontiers. In the East, no doubt, such roads were already in

existence, for in Greek times there had been an elaborate posting system throughout Asia and Syria. But in the West and North the roads had to be cut through virgin forests and swamps and over mountains which had never before been penetrated by a wheeled vehicle. Apparently the principle adopted was to construct the main highways at the expense of the State, inasmuch as they were primarily intended for the rapid movement of the legions, and to throw the cost of the cross-roads and subsidiary ways upon the localities through which they passed — an equitable management which was perfectly fair to the provincial taxpayer, who benefited from both alike.

Highly centralised though the provincial system was, a generous measure of local government was left to the provincials. Throughout the East there were many free cities which were, to all intents and purposes, autonomous. The provinces of Asia and Syria were in fact hardly more than aggregates of city states, while the Western provinces were aggregates of cantons, as in Gaul, or of tribes, as in Spain. Some of these city states were absolutely independent of Rome, though they lay within the confines of a province. The *liberae et fœderatae civitates* were protected by a special treaty. These paid no taxes of any sort to the Empire; they managed their own finances; they enjoyed their own laws without let or hindrance. Others, which though free, had no treaty with Rome, but merely a charter of rights revocable at will, were in a less-favoured position. Their *libertas* gave them the right of self-

government but did not carry with it immunity from the tribute. Augustus, while generally confirming them in their privileges, did not hesitate to punish them by deprivation for turbulence or maladministration. For example, during his visit to Asia Minor in 22 B.C. he conferred freedom upon Samos but took it away from Cyzicus, Tyre, and Sidon on account of their seditiousness. According to Suetonius, he abrogated the treaty rights even of certain allied free cities, which had got utterly out of hand (*ad exitium licentia praecipites*), but he lightened the burdens of many which were heavily in debt, rebuilt others which had been shattered by earthquakes, and bestowed Latin rights and, in some instances, the full Roman citizenship upon those which could shew that they had rendered valuable service to the Roman people. The Emperor, in other words, was not suspicious of local self-government and did not consider it incompatible with a highly centralised régime.

Moreover, these Greek cities of Asia Minor and Syria were not only autonomous but enjoyed their own provincial representative assemblies, formed originally, no doubt, for festival and religious purposes. Here delegates of the various groups of cities met in conference and their proceedings were by no means confined to mere formalities. On the contrary, we find that when a province had cause of quarrel with a governor and wished to lay an impeachment against him for injustice or extortion, it was in the provincial assembly that the matter was formally discussed and by that assembly that the

indictment was drawn up. Deputies were appointed to bring the matter before the Senate at Rome, where they were assured of a much fairer hearing than under the Republic. "The subject nations," Thrasea declared a few years later, "used to tremble before the pro-consuls; now the pro-consul trembles before the subjects over whom he rules." These assemblies had also the privilege of recommending a popular governor to the Emperor's favourable notice, and so eagerly sought after was this testimonial of good character that Augustus found it necessary to forbid the assemblies from passing any such resolution until sixty days after a governor's departure, in order to prevent him from intriguing to get such a resolution passed.

The Emperor also gave the provinces an honest currency, a boon which all engaged in commerce must have hailed with delight. He withdrew from circulation the debased coin issued in the days of Sulla, who had passed a law making it obligatory upon the public to accept at its face value all money issued from the mints, irrespective of its intrinsic worth. The means whereby this operation was carried out are not known, nor is it stated whether the public or the State bore the loss, but, for the future, it was enacted that all gold and silver coins should be of standard weight and that the right of coinage should be restricted to Rome and a few provincial mints. And as a curious but convincing illustration — in itself of minor importance — of Augustus's general policy, it is worth noting that he allowed the Senate the right of minting the copper coinage.



COIN OF AUGUSTUS.



COIN OF AUGUSTUS TO CELEBRATE PEACE.



COIN OF AUGUSTUS TO CELEBRATE THE RECOVERY OF ARMENIA.



COIN OF AUGUSTUS TO CELEBRATE THE RESTORATION OF THE ROMAN PRISONERS FROM PARTHIA.

Nothing could be more characteristic. The gold and silver were to be imperial; the copper was to be senatorial. Such a division of the metals was symbolical of much.

There can be no question that the provinces were the chief gainers by the change from the Republic to the Principate, and that they sincerely welcomed the establishment of the Empire. They reaped advantage therefrom in a hundred diverse ways. The strong central government at Rome imposed peace within the frontiers. The older provinces no longer required armies for their protection and were able to pursue unmolested the path of peaceful development. Such a province as Further Spain was no longer threatened by the mountaineers of Lusitania; the Narbonensis had no more cause to fear the half-conquered tribes of Gaul, now that their hinterlands had become Roman too. The same was true in the East of provinces like Macedonia, Asia, Bithynia, and Cilicia. The seas were swept clear of pirates and their coasts were secure, while the advancement of the frontier to the Danube protected Macedonia from the incursions of the Dacians, and the interior of Asia Minor grew more settled from year to year. By planting the legions permanently on the boundaries, Augustus drew a wall of swords around the provincials and kept them sheltered from invasion. The Republic — had it survived — might perhaps have done the same, but it is hard to believe that the Senate would have conceived such a policy or would have dared to carry it into practice, involving as it did the creation of huge military commands.

The rapid Romanisation of Spain and Gaul was the chief triumph of Augustus in the West; while throughout the East commerce prospered as it had never prospered before. Even Tacitus, despite all his Republican sympathies, was compelled to acknowledge that "the provinces did not object to the new régime": "*Neque provinciæ illum rerum statum abnuebant.*" That is the grudging admission of a man who would like to have denied, if denial had been possible, the clear evidence of his senses, and, coming from such a source, it is tantamount to proof that the loyalty of the provinces was beyond dispute. There may not have been any great outburst of enthusiasm towards its ruler on the part of the Grecian East. The Greek populations of Syria and Asia Minor, who had long ago forgotten their ancestors' devotion to freedom, accepted foreign rule as a matter of course, having never known what it was to be independent. Provided their customs and observances were not interfered with, provided they were left free to amuse themselves with their festivals and their arts,— which, as Cicero had long before pointed out, solaced them for their loss of freedom,— they were content. Factious among themselves, they never threatened insurrection against the imperial master whose armies guarded them alike from the Parthian and the Median and from the depredations of the mountaineer tribes which lay behind them. One need only compare the letters of the younger Pliny written to Trajan from the province of Bithynia, not with the terrible picture of the rule of Verres in Sicily but with the letters written

by Cicero himself from Cilicia, to see that the spirit of the Roman provincial administration had in the intervening years undergone a complete revolution.

It is not to be supposed that night was suddenly changed into day by the mere fact that there was now an Emperor in Rome instead of a ruling clique of oligarchs, most of whom had looked forward to the day when their own turn would come for loot and plunder. But the situation was profoundly changed by the substitution of one permanent master for a yearly succession of masters who came and went. In the imperial provinces the Emperor was supreme. He appointed his own men to the governorships. All the revenues from these provinces flowed into his new treasury, and, responsible as he was for the security of an Empire which required a vast expenditure, he chose his financial officers with care, and looked strictly into the details of his budget. To say that peculation and rapacity on the part of his agents were thereby made impossible would be a gross exaggeration, but at least they became infinitely more dangerous to the corrupt official, who now had to answer not to a venal jury but to the Emperor himself, or to a court of law which gave its verdict under the Emperor's eyes. Augustus, in short, created a great Civil Service which offered a fine career to men of capacity and ambition, and in which promotion was only to be looked for as a reward for fidelity to trust. Very little is heard during his reign of provincial misgovernment. Dion Cassius, indeed, attributes the revolt of Pannonia and Illyricum to the discontent of the natives at

their financial burdens. Varus, again, is described as having gone to the rich province of Syria a poor man and as having stripped it bare: "*Pauper divitem ingressus, dives pauperem reliquit.*" But the most striking case of all is that of Licinus, a freedman of Gallic birth who rose to the important position of chief procurator in Gaul. According to Dion Cassius, Licinus not only angered the Gauls by his insolent and overbearing demeanour, but extorted from them their monthly taxes fourteen times in the year, after the style of the worst kind of Republican governor. And the story goes that when Augustus visited Lugdunum and called his procurator to account for his rapacity, Licinus invited him to his house, displayed before him the treasures which he had amassed and avowed that, if he had plundered, he had done so not for his own gain but for that of his imperial master. Augustus, we are told, condoned the crime and, instead of dismissing Licinus from his service, took the bribe and advanced the crafty procurator to even higher dignities. But these exceptions, important though they are, do not affect the general truth of the argument that the provincials were far less exposed to the rapacity of their governors than they had been in the old days. Instead of the provinces being "the farms of the Roman people"—to quote Cicero's striking and significant phrase from the Verrine orations—they were now the farms of the Emperor, who might occasionally rack-rent them to meet some extraordinary expenditure, but who, as a rule, took care that no one else should do the same. Some years later, when

Tiberius's financial advisers recommended him to increase the provincial tribute, the Emperor replied with a homely proverb which contained the maximum of political insight: "A good shepherd shears his sheep, he does not flay the skin off their backs"; "*Boni pastoris esse tondere pecus, non deglubere.*" Such in a word was the provincial policy of Augustus with respect to taxation, and it fully explains the popularity of the Empire throughout the provinces.

CHAPTER XIV

MÆCENAS AND AGRIPPA

AT this point we may turn aside to take note of the men who stood on the steps of this new and anomalous throne, which bore the monogram, not of Augustus, but of the Republic. Adroitness alone would never have carried its occupant to an eminence thus supreme. He possessed the rare faculty, itself a form of genius, of selecting capable lieutenants and of trusting them when chosen. Augustus did not win his way to empire, like the first Napoleon, by a dazzling series of victories; his success reminds us rather of the founder of the modern German Empire, for he owed almost as much as Kaiser William I. to his great Ministers of State, and he owed most of all to Mæcenas and Agrippa.

Caius Cilnius Mæcenas was some years older than his master. Of his early career nothing is known, nor does his name emerge from obscurity until the time of the Perusian War and the Treaty of Brundisium. He traced his descent — or rather others traced it for him, for he himself laughed at pedigrees — from the ancient kings of Etruria, and his family, which belonged to the equestrian order, had taken

little part in the politics of the Republic. Mæcenas too, was a typical *eques*. Office had no charm for him. Soon — though the precise date is uncertain — after Augustus had firmly established his position, Mæcenas retired gladly to his business and his pleasures. Yet, for many a long year, whenever delicate negotiations were afoot which called for careful handling; or whenever a diplomatist was required to strike a bargain, or patch up a quarrel, Augustus had always relied upon the shrewd common-sense and the infinite tact of Mæcenas. It was he who had arranged the Treaties of Brundisium and Tarentum in B. C. 40 and 37; he who had schemed the earlier matrimonial alliances of Augustus, first with Clodia, the daughter of Fulvia and Publius Clodius — a union which was speedily dissolved by the Perusian War,— and secondly with Scribonia, the sister of Lucius Scribonius Libo, who was the father-in-law of Sextus Pompeius. This too lasted no longer than the needs of the political situation demanded, for on the very day that Scribonia bore him his only child — the daughter who was afterwards to bring disgrace upon his house — Augustus divorced the mother and married Livia, whom he had snatched from the side of her husband, Tiberius Claudius Nero. The ill-omened union between Octavia and Marcus Antonius which was designed to cement the Treaty of Brundisium, though subsequently it introduced a new and bitter source of discord between the Triumvirs, was also due to the advice of Mæcenas. It was to him too that Octavian had turned whenever the murmurs of

discontent in the capital grew serious during his own long and repeated absences from Rome. When the issue of the war with Sextus Pompeius seemed to be hanging doubtfully in the balance, when Rome was starving because the corn-ships failed to come up the Tiber and the people were clamouring for peace at any price with the corsair son of Cnæus Pompeius, it was Mæcenas who was despatched in haste to silence the grumblers and overawe the discontented. And when eventually, at the supreme moment, Octavian and Agrippa sailed with their armaments to bring Antonius to battle, Mæcenas was left behind in Italy to forward supplies and reinforcements and, above all, to keep Rome quiet until the decisive blow had been struck. Clearly therefore, Mæcenas was a man of sterling capacity and played a great part between the years B. C. 40 and 27. Yet he had no political ambitions, and he closed his public career without a sigh.

The explanation is simple. Mæcenas was an *eques*. The only reward he asked for his services was liberty to live his own life in his own way. He had no wish to enter the Senate, or wear the senatorial ornamenta. Mæcenas was enormously rich, a man of the world, a *bon viveur* who thoroughly loved the elegancies of life, a man of taste in literature and the arts, and a discriminating connoisseur. Yet, though he retired from politics in the sense that he held no office, his political influence for long remained unimpaired. If the Emperor wanted advice, he still turned for it to Mæcenas. He was not a minister in the modern sense of the term, but, as

the friend of Cæsar, his wise counsel was ever at his master's disposal. Nor was this the sole service which Mæcenas rendered. As one of the leading financiers of the Roman world, his indirect political influence must have been enormous, and he was, moreover, the chief patron of literature and the arts. It was of inestimable advantage to Augustus that there should be in the capital a brilliant man like Mæcenas, who kept open house on a scale of great magnificence, and gave endless banquets and entertainments, where political asperities might be softened and political conversions might be made. His splendid mansion on the Esquiline Hill formed precisely such a centre, partly social, partly literary and artistic, and partly political. The guests of Mæcenas, even amid their revels, did not forget that their host was the "friend of Cæsar"—a phrase which henceforth acquired a significance of its own, almost as distinct as the title of one of the new imperial offices. Velleius Paterculus has sketched Mæcenas's character in a striking sentence which brings out the two sides of his nature. "He was," says the historian, "sleeplessly alert and prompt to act in any critical moment; but when business was not pressing, he carried his luxurious idleness beyond even the point of effeminacy."* The times were breeding extraordinary men—none was more extraordinary than Mæcenas, whose whole manner of life was opposed to the ideal which Augustus

* "Vir, ubi res vigiliam exigeret, sane exsomnis, providens atque agendi sciens; simul vero aliquid ex negotio remitti posset, otio ac mollitiis pæne ultra feminam fluens."

set before his people. The Emperor might preach simplicity, austerity, and public duty; his friend's answer was to build a princely mansion on the Esquiline, and live in luxurious retirement.

Yet it is impossible to overestimate the service which he rendered to Augustus by the skilful way in which he dispensed his patronage. To reconcile Roman society to the political revolution which had been wrought was one of the great objects of Augustus. Mæcenas accomplished this, as far as it was capable of accomplishment, by the aid of the writers and publicists of the day. There was no public press to be inspired, but there were at least poets in abundance. Mæcenas tuned their lyres, and set them singing the praises of Augustus. Mæcenas, Asinius Pollio, and Messala—these were the three chief patrons of literature in the Augustan era, and they founded, with the active sympathy and encouragement of the Emperor himself, what Valerius Maximus justly described as a "College of Poets." It was a college with definite political ends in view, and it was their triumph, their almost unique triumph, that they wrote not only good politics, but good poetry. Let us see, then, who belonged to this famous Academy of Immortals in the real as well as in the technical sense of the term. It contained Virgil, the nature worshipper, and Horace, the urbane. It contained the neurotic Sextus Propertius, who gave a new flexibility and richness to the elegiac metre; and Tibullus, "the pure and fine." These four can be matched by few succeeding literary eras, and surpassed, perhaps, by none. But it

also contained others, of almost equal reputation, whose names alone have come down to us. There was Lucius Varius Rufus, the friend and literary executor of Virgil, who is bracketed by Horace in immortal association with the Mantuan, and whose tragedy of *Thyestes* was pronounced by Quintilian to equal the greatest masterpieces of the Greek tragedians. There was Cornelius Gallus, declared by Ovid to be the most consummate artist in elegiac verse. There was Valgius, of whom Tibullus said that none came nearer to Homer. There was Lucius Junius Calidus, "our most brilliant poet"—it is Cornelius Nepos who is speaking—"since Lucretius and Catullus." There was Rabirius, "the mighty-mouthed," who composed a poem on the Alexandrine War; Cotta, who anticipated Lucan in describing in epic verse the campaign of Pharsalus, and Cornelius Severus, who sang the Sicilian War against Sextus Pompeius. There was Fundanius, who wrote comedies, and Pollio, author as well as literary patron, who wrote tragedies.

All these are now merely names. It is, of course, absolutely impossible to say whether, if their works had survived, posterity would have endorsed the verdict of their contemporaries. In some cases it almost certainly would not. There are good grounds for suspecting that it is the best which has survived, and that much of what passed for fine poetry at the court of Augustus little deserved the name, and was as conventional and stilted as the typical court literature of the age of Elizabeth or the age of Anne and Louis XIV. Genius flourishes

in spite of court influence, not because of it. Virgil was fortunate, for his noble theme suited him to perfection; Horace was a light-hearted man of the world; the real interest of Tibullus and Propertius lay in their own all-absorbing love affairs. Certainty is out of the question, but we may surmise that they were not all geniuses who sat at the hospitable board of Mæcenas, and that some at least of the lost authors were better politicians and courtiers than poets. Virgil, incomparably the greatest of them all, drew his inspiration from the country, and rarely went to court. He has shed a reflected glory over his contemporaries. When we think of the Augustan age of literature, we think chiefly of him—of him and of Livy, the solitary prose writer of the first rank of the reign of Augustus. Only one quarter of the great *History of Rome*, written by Livy, which he brought down to the death of Drusus in B. C. 9, has survived; the rest is known to us merely from brief analyses of the work, which were themselves compiled from an abridged edition of the original. Livy was not a critical historian; he was not careful to sift his facts. Content with broad outlines, his main object was to paint an impressive picture of the development of Rome, and his opulence of diction and matchless style were eminently suited to his subject. He was not a courtier; there is little or no trace in his writing of the influence either of Mæcenas or of Augustus himself. His sympathies, indeed, were republican rather than imperial. Yet they were expressed in language which was fraught with no danger to the imperial government. If he



CONTORNIATE OF HORACE.
(BRITISH MUSEUM.)

idealised the early days of the Republic, so, too, did Augustus. His denunciation of the disorders through which the State had passed, his laments over the growth of luxury and the loss of the ancient virtues might have been inspired by the Emperor himself. The lesson which he preached in prose was precisely the same as that which Virgil was preaching in verse and Augustus in his edicts—the need for order, moderation, and religion.

In other words, the literature of the day was wholly on the side of the court; the opposition, such as it was, was voiceless or anonymous. We cannot doubt that this fact alone exercised an incalculable influence over a public opinion which was in the main entirely favourable to Augustus. That influence would have been great even if the court authors had been men of no special distinction. But they were, on the contrary, the most brilliant group which Rome had known. They made their appeal to all classes of men. Society might be corrupt, but it liked to listen to so noble a teacher as Virgil. The world has seen that phenomenon many times since Augustus's day, notably, perhaps, at the court of Louis XIV., where, though religion and piety were at a heavy discount, the court went regularly to church and listened with rapture to Bossuet and Fénélon. But the real representatives of Augustan society were Horace and Ovid—Horace of the earlier part of the reign, Ovid of the latter. There is hardly a trace of real moral earnestness in Horace; in Ovid the quality is not only absent, but, in its place, we find cynical flippancy and scepticism.

Horace laments the degeneracy of his time with an exquisite urbanity which conceals the smile that lies underneath. He is elaborating a text given him by another. His task finished, he rises to go and dine with Mæcenas, where the fare is very different from that which he has been praising as having sufficed for the "*Sabella proles.*" Horace is a very comfortable satirist; his strokes do not hurt. The golden mean, a judicious blend of not too disagreeable virtue with not too flagrant vice, best suits his easy temper. But though his famous "Secular Hymn," composed for the great religious festival of B.C. 17, leaves the reader cold, there are life and movement and sincerity in his lines when he shews us the Emperor immersed in endless toil and bearing the burden of empire on his shoulders, and describes the victories which, under his direction, the Roman arms have won. To be acclaimed by Virgil as a "very god," and by Horace as the pillar and prop of the State—this was no trifling benefit even to the commander-in-chief of all the legions. It is the fate of most monarchs to have their achievements sung by mediocrities whose adulation is nauseating and whose flattery is laid on with a trowel. Augustus fared better. The literary genius of Rome was enlisted in his service by Mæcenas, and for twenty years the most gracious of the Nine Muses never failed to extol his work.

Virgil died in B.C. 19; Mæcenas and Horace both died in B.C. 8. There is evidence to shew that during the later years of Mæcenas's life he and the Emperor became gradually estranged from one another.

According to one account, Augustus complained that Mæcenas had been indiscreet in the matter of the conspiracy of Murena in B.C. 22, and had confided State secrets connected therewith to his wife, Terentia; according to another, the Emperor himself paid this lady unwarranted attentions, which were resented by Mæcenas. Whatever the reason, the result was a cooling of the old friendship. Tacitus, in speaking of the death of Sallustius Crispus, the adopted son of the historian, a knight like Mæcenas, "who, without rising to a senator's rank, surpassed in power many who had won prætorships and consulships," says that Crispus for long stood next in favour to Mæcenas, and afterwards became the chief depository of imperial secrets, until in advanced age he retained the shadow rather than the substance of Augustus's friendship. "The same, too," adds the historian in one of his most sententious phrases, "had happened to Mæcenas; so rarely is it the destiny of power to be lasting, or perhaps a sense of weariness steals over princes when they have bestowed everything, and over favourites when there is nothing left for them to desire." Yet, despite this coolness, Augustus remembered with gratitude to his dying day the faithful service which Mæcenas had rendered to him in earlier years, and in the hour of misfortune or disaster it was his wont to exclaim, "This would never have happened if Mæcenas or Agrippa had been alive." "*Mæcenatis erunt vera tropæa fides*"—so Propertius had sung years before. His loyalty to Augustus was constant. He dared to give honest counsel, couched even in the language

of reproof. There is a well-known story which relates how one day, when Augustus was presiding in a court of law and was pressing the accused with undue severity, Mæcenas wrote the two words, "Up, Hangman!" on a scrap of paper and threw it into the folds of Augustus's toga. The Emperor smoothed out the paper, read the message, accepted the rebuke, and quitted the court without a word. Mæcenas was credited by his contemporaries with having been the real author of "the clemency of Augustus," and with having brought his chief round to the view that moderation and clemency were the true policy for him to adopt. If this honourable distinction be his, it is not the least conspicuous feather in his well-plumed cap. If his retirement from active public life and public duty seems selfish, according to the modern idea of the responsibility of wealth, it must be remembered that it did not present itself in that aspect to his contemporaries. He did all that was expected of a knight, and we find Propertius singling out this very fact of his retirement for special praise:

> "Parcis, et in tenues humilem te colligis umbras,
> Velorum plenos subtrahis ipse sinus.
> Crede mihi, magnos æquabunt ista Camillos
> Judicia, et venies tu quoque in ora virum."

The parallel with Camillus is an extraordinary one even when we remember that Mæcenas was the patron, and that Propertius was entertaining lively hopes of favours to come. But the metaphors, at least, were well chosen. Mæcenas preferred to draw

in his sails just when they were filled with a favouring breeze. He could have had whatever he had asked for; he preferred, in the poet's almost untranslatable phrase, to live "*intra fortunam suam.*" He knew Augustus better than we can hope to know him; perhaps he chose the safer, though the less noble, part.

But there was another to whom Augustus owed even more than he did to Mæcenas. This was Marcus Vipsanius Agrippa, the friend of his student days at Apollonia and his constant associate and loyal helper throughout the years when he was climbing to supreme power. Without Agrippa it is more than doubtful whether Augustus would have succeeded in the struggle. It was he who had broken the insurrection of Fulvia and Lucius Antonius in the Perusian War, and had created the navy which destroyed Sextus Pompeius at what was perhaps the most critical juncture of Augustus's fortunes. It was he, too, who had crushed Marcus Antonius in the sea-fight at Actium. In other words, Augustus had to thank Agrippa for the victories he had won both by land and sea; and he frankly recognised the debt by loading his lieutenant with richly merited honours. Agrippa had been rewarded with the consulship in 37 B.C.; he had been given the hand of Augustus's niece, Marcella, in marriage, and was joint consul with his chief in 28 and 27 B.C., the years during which Augustus carried out his revision of the Senate. Agrippa was the second man in the Roman world — the *alter ego* of the Princeps — and his loyal co-operation was steadfast and sure. For

many years no differences arose between them. When Augustus was absent from Rome, busy with the reorganisation of the provinces, Agrippa took up the reins of government. Or if any serious war broke out, which called for the presence of the first general of the day, Agrippa was invariably entrusted with the command and invariably returned to Rome in triumph. Naturally, therefore, he regarded himself, and was regarded throughout the Roman world, as the heir to Augustus's political power in case of the Emperor's death, and there can be little doubt that if the illness of Augustus had terminated fatally, either at Tarraco in B.C. 25 or in Rome two years later, Agrippa would have stepped forward as a claimant for the Principate.

But the cordial relations existing between Augustus and Agrippa now began to be affected by the fact that the younger members of the imperial family were growing up to manhood. Augustus had but one child of his own, his daughter Julia, born to him of his marriage with Scribonia, in the year 37 B.C. The Empress Livia had borne him no children, and his hopes of an heir were growing faint. But Livia had had two sons by her first husband, Tiberius Nero, the second of whom was born three months after her marriage with Augustus, and these two boys, Tiberius and Drusus, were ready to enter public life. Moreover, besides his daughter Julia and his two step-sons, there were the children of his sister Octavia, by her two marriages with Marcellus and Marcus Antonius, and the tender regard which Augustus had always shewn for his sister was ex-



MARCUS AGRIPPA.
FROM THE STATUE IN VENICE.

tended to her children, notably to the young Marcus Marcellus, her son by her first marriage. In the year 25 B. C., the favourite of the Emperor was unquestionably Marcellus, a youth of engaging presence and great promise, and it was to him that he gave the hand of his daughter in marriage. Marcellus was then in his eighteenth, while Julia was in her fourteenth year, and the circumstance that this marriage was celebrated while Augustus was absent in Spain seems to shew his anxiety that the union should take place without delay. Agrippa resented a marriage which clearly portended the blighting of his own hopes, and took it ill that the only daughter of Augustus should have been bestowed on any but himself. There was no open rupture, but Augustus gave renewed proof of his good will towards Marcellus by appointing him ædile for the year 23, and public opinion in Rome seems to have leaped to the conclusion that Marcellus would be Augustus's heir. This was the year of the Emperor's grave illness, during which he handed over his signet-ring to Agrippa and puzzled everyone to know what he meant thereby. Augustus recovered, but the confidence between the two friends was broken, and Agrippa was sent to the East in charge of an important mission. According to the gossip of the day, Agrippa withdrew from Rome hurt and angry, and, instead of going to Syria, went no farther than Lesbos. Whether this gossip is trustworthy no one can say; Josephus, in speaking of Agrippa's mission, writes as though he were actually associated with Augustus in the Empire. Yet it is probable enough that

Agrippa, who had such good ground for jealousy and suspicion, actually entertained the sentiments ascribed to him and thought it hard that he who had done so much for Augustus should be supplanted by a mere stripling. The death of Marcellus, however, during his ædileship, removed this formidable competitor out of Agrippa's path. Augustus grieved bitterly at his loss. It was the first death in the imperial family, the first check to his dynastic ambitions, which were to suffer, as the years went on, a succession of blows so cruel and unlooked for that they seemed to have been administered by malignant Fate.

Nor was the old cordiality between Augustus and Agrippa immediately restored. Reconciliation was deferred for two years, until Augustus, then in Sicily, bade Agrippa come and confer with him, and sent him to Rome to take charge of the city. In the meantime, we may be sure that Livia was scheming her hardest to obtain the Emperor's favour for her own sons, and to replace the lost Marcellus in his regard by Tiberius. It is somewhat strange that she met with no better success, for Livia was one of the ablest women of her time. Though she bore Augustus no children, she contrived to retain intact her powerful ascendency over his mind. She devoted her life to securing the succession for Tiberius and in the end her efforts were triumphant, yet for many years they seemed foredoomed to failure, and Tiberius was only adopted by the Emperor when practically every other possible condidate had been removed by death. It can scarcely be doubted that

Livia had done her utmost to persuade Augustus to bestow Julia upon Tiberius in preference to Marcellus, or that she renewed those efforts when Marcellus died. Yet she failed and had the mortification of seeing Agrippa reconciled to her husband and married to the girl widow, Julia, in B. C. 21. Marcella was divorced, at the suggestion, it is said, of her own mother Octavia, who, in the interests of her brother's house, was ready to sacrifice the happiness of a daughter, and by this marriage Agrippa stood forth as the recognised heir of the Emperor. Three years later, on his return from Gaul and Spain, he received an even more flattering distinction at the hands of Augustus, for the Emperor made him his colleague in the *tribunicia potestas*, and thus publicly admitted him to a partnership in the Principate.

Whether Augustus, in elevating Agrippa to this exalted position, acted entirely of his own free will it is more difficult to say. There is, of course, no question that Agrippa was the fittest to succeed him and that he had fully earned the reversion of the Principate in the event of the Emperor's death. But it was universally believed at the time that Augustus was actuated by considerations of policy, rather than of personal inclination, in thus giving Agrippa the hand of his daughter Julia. According to Velleius Paterculus, Agrippa was quite willing to be the second man in the Empire, provided that Augustus was the first. He was prepared to be the servant of Augustus, but of Augustus alone, and would acknowledge no other master. If this judgment

be right, and it certainly seems to be confirmed by his jealousy of Marcellus and the estrangement which followed, Augustus may well have come to the conclusion that it was safer for him to take his too powerful subject into partnership. There is a remarkable—though probably fictitious — story in Dion Cassius which represents Mæcenas advising the Emperor either to make Agrippa his son-in-law or to put him out of the way. Augustus chose the former alternative, and thereby thought that he had settled the question of the succession. It must have been a bitter blow to the Empress Livia and to the hopes she entertained for her son Tiberius, but apparently she acquiesced in the decision and was content to bide her time.

Agrippa's marriage with Julia was fruitful. She bore him two sons, Caius and Lucius, in quick succession, and these infant princes were formally adopted by Augustus in the year 17 B. C. before Agrippa and his wife left Rome for the East, where they remained for four years. On their return, Agrippa again received the *tribunicia potestas* for another term of five years and was then sent in command of an army to Pannonia, where he died in the following year (B. C. 12) at the age of fifty-one. Augustus in person delivered the funeral panegyric on his dead colleague and buried him in his own splendid mausoleum, but it was strongly suspected that he was secretly relieved at the death of his greatest minister and most successful general. It is probable enough that the relations between them had long been strained, and that each had been uneasily

suspicious of the motives of the other. "The glad confident morning" of their early association had vanished; yet there is not a shred of evidence to shew that Agrippa swerved at any single moment from his perfect loyalty to Augustus.



CHAPTER XV

THE ROMANISATION OF THE WEST

THE pacification and reorganisation of the West, and the amazing success which attended the policy of Augustus in Gaul and Spain, form perhaps the most enduring tribute to his careful statesmanship. Let us glance first at the four Gallic provinces, which covered practically the whole of modern France and Belgium. Cisalpine Gaul was now incorporated in the Italian peninsula. To the west of the Alps lay the province of Gallia Narbonensis, formed in the days of the Gracchi, extending from Lake Geneva on the eastern side and embracing the southern valleys of the Rhone, and then narrowing down to a thin strip of coast line towards the Pyrenees. The remainder of Gaul, fully four-fifths of the whole, had but recently been added to the Roman dominion by Julius Cæsar. The more remote portions were still unsettled, but Julius had done his work well and in an almost inconceivably short space of time. He had not merely broken but shattered the strength of the most warlike tribes, and three provinces were carved out of the vast region which Cæsar had subdued. In the west lay

the province of Aquitania, covering the watershed of the Garonne, with the Loire for its boundary on the north and east; the middle province, Lugdunensis, included Normandy and Brittany and a wide strip on the northern bank of the Seine and then ran down through the centre of the country to the Rhone; while the third province, Belgica, included at first all that remained of central and north-eastern Gaul and was bounded by the Atlantic and the Rhine, though subsequently the Rhine lands were taken from Belgica and formed — with a wide strip on the opposite bank — into the two border provinces of Higher and Lower Germany. Augustus and his generals first of all completed the conquests of Julius, and then gave the Gallic peoples stable and settled government.

Aquitania was Iberian rather than Celtic and its inhabitants belonged ethnically to the fierce tribes which dwelt in northern Spain and not to those of central Gaul. Both slopes of the Pyrenees had been Iberian, and there is thus a close connection between the Spanish wars of B.C. 27 and 26 and the campaigns of Marcus Valerius Messala in Aquitania during the same period, when he routed the natives in a great battle just over the border of the adjoining province, near the city of Narbo. This consummated the victories gained by Agrippa in Aquitania, eleven years before, and seems to have broken utterly the Iberian power, and, in consequence thereof, Augustus was able to hand over to the Senate the province of Gallia Narbonensis in B.C. 22. Thenceforward Gaul remained tranquil. No doubt, occa-

sional punitive expeditions had to be undertaken, but none of these was sufficiently important to find a place in the annals of Roman history; and, as no Gallic triumphs are recorded, the inference is that down to the rising in the reign of Tiberius in the year 21 A.D.— a rising which was speedily quelled by the legions of the frontier — the peace of Gaul was scarcely broken. Two causes contributed to this grand result. One was the ruthless severity with which Julius had subdued the tribes. He had not hesitated to massacre as well as to slay. But if he shewed no mercy towards the foe which opposed him in the field, he was generosity itself to the conquered when they had made their submission, and Augustus remained true to his uncle's policy. We may fairly compare their methods with those adopted, with equal success, by Russia in Central Asia, where in an equally short period the Turcomans and the Khanates of Transcaspia have been reduced to willing subjection. The Romans in Gaul did not worry the Celtic races; they did not dragoon them into accepting their superior civilisation or interfere more than was absolutely necessary with the tribal customs to which the natives were passionately attached. And it is significant of the constant watch kept by Augustus over the Gallic provinces and the assiduity with which he fostered their goodwill that he not only repeatedly visited them in person, but sent thither, in the capacity of administrators as well as generals, the leading members of the Imperial House. Augustus went to Gaul in 27 and





COIN OF AUGUSTUS AND AGRIPPA.





COIN OF AUGUSTUS.



COIN OF MUSA.



COIN OF ORODES.





STATER OF ANTIOCH.

completed the census of the province of Lugdunensis; in the year 20 B.C. he was represented by his great Minister, Agrippa. Later, he spent three whole years, 16–13 B.C., in Gaul, and then, when he finally quitted it, he sent in turn Tiberius, Drusus, and Germanicus to build upon the foundations which he had laid.

Augustus left the old cantonal system of the Celts intact. The sixty-four cantons, or communal districts, continued to elect their ancient representative diet, which met at stated periods and, subject to the supremacy of the imperial representative, governed its own local affairs. This diet was practically a national parliament of the three imperial Gallic provinces and assessed each canton for its share of the annual tribute. It assembled at Lugdunum (Lyons), the Roman burgess-colony which had been founded by Plancus, and there chose the priest of the three Gauls, who was the head of the national religion, and celebrated the great festival of the Emperor. That festival, inaugurated by Drusus in B.C. 12, when he consecrated at Lugdunum an altar to Rome and to the *genius* of the Emperor, became thenceforth the most important event in the Gallic calendar. In accordance with the traditional policy of the Republic, Augustus willingly tolerated their national religion, and the Romans speedily identified many of the barbaric divinities of Gaul with the deities of the Roman Olympus. If the attributes of Taranis were similar to those of Jupiter, or the qualities of Belenus and Belisana indistinguishable from

those of Apollo and Minerva, it was a simple matter for Gaul and Roman to worship them under their double names, and it tended to unity that both conquerors and conquered should sacrifice upon a common altar. Whether these were the gods of Druidism, or whether the Druid religion was something special and distinct, we cannot stay to enquire. But it is at least certain that the Druid priests were the leaders of the extreme nationalist and irreconcilable party in Gaul, and that their rites involved human sacrifice, which the Roman Emperor sternly refused to countenance. Parallels are dangerous, but it is tempting to draw one from India, where the policy of the British Government is to afford complete toleration to the religious beliefs and practices of the natives, save where their rites involve the sacrifice of human life. And as the wildest and least tractable sects are invariably those whose rites are the most repugnant to Western sentiment, so in Gaul we may well believe that the Druid priesthood, clinging tenaciously to its savagery, was also politically the most dangerous to the peaceful development of Gaul. Augustus gradually introduced measures tending to the repression of Druidism; he prohibited any Roman citizen from taking part in its rites; and, with his usual sagacity, he sought to make the yearly festival of the Gallic diet a counterpoise to the old annual assembly of the Celtic priests. Whether he took any active steps for the expulsion of the Druids is not stated. But at least the Druids found themselves driven to take shelter

in the remoter districts of Armorica, and even to cross the Channel into Britain, and the next Emperors were able boldly to prohibit the practice of the cult throughout their Gallic domains. The festival of Rome and Augustus, held at Lugdunum, at which the national diet sacrificed and swore fealty to the Emperor, became one of the strongest factors in the Romanisation of the country.

Augustus was content to let the seed which he had sown germinate in its own natural time. He did not flood the Gallic provinces with new colonies. Lugdunum remained the solitary burgess-colony in the three provinces. As the seat both of the imperial and the national administration, as the station of the Gallic mint and with a picked cohort for its permanent garrison, as the centre of the great military roads which here converged from the most distant parts of the provinces, Lugdunum grew at a very rapid rate and became the focus of national life. So far as history has left any records, it was not until the reign of Claudius that Latin rights were conferred upon a Gallic town. Augustus was chary of bestowing either Roman or Latin rights upon the Gallic communities, and he even prohibited those Gauls who had attained to the full citizenship for services rendered to the State from entering upon the official career for which that citizenship qualified them in the eye of the law. In this respect he departed from the policy of his uncle, who had admitted Gauls into the Senate. Why he took this narrow view, it is hard to say, unless it is to be explained by his strong conservatism, and by

his anxiety to check the intrusion of foreign elements into the Roman system. But he insisted that the Roman language should be adopted for all official purposes by the cantonal authorities and by the diet of the three provinces. Modern experience has proved that there is no greater barrier to racial amalgamation than the presence of rival languages existing side by side, and the result of his wise enactment was that the Roman tongue at once became the tongue of the Gallic nobles and eventually the tongue of the whole country. Augustus's policy of judicious compromise, seen in the preservation of the old cantonal communities for purposes of local government and administration, but seen also in his restriction of the more fanatical forms of the native religion and the imposition of the Roman as the one official language of the country, bore a splendid harvest. When he died, the yoke of Rome over Celtic Gaul was hardly felt as the yoke of an alien power. The processes of amalgamation had not only begun but were in full swing, and Gaul was already an integral part of the Roman world.

In this brief review of what Augustus did for the three Celtic provinces we have said nothing of the older province of Gallia Narbonensis on the Mediteranean littoral. This was now regarded as belonging rather to Italy than to Gaul. For whereas Augustus jealously withheld from Aquitania, Lugdunensis, and Belgica the Roman and Latin franchises, these were freely bestowed in Gallia Narbonensis. The cantons were strictly preserved in the one

case; they were gradually done away with in the other. The territory which had belonged to the ancient Greek city of Massilia (Marseilles) had been stripped from her by Julius and new Roman burgess-colonies were planted within it. Forum Julii (Fréjus) became the northern station of the imperial fleet; while at the mouth of the Rhone there sprang up the great trading city of Arelate (Arles), which in course of time robbed Narbo of much of its importance and struck a fatal blow at the waning commerce of Massilia. In addition to these Roman colonies, a number of other towns arose to which Augustus gave Latin rights. Nemausus (Nîmes), Aquæ Sextiæ (Aix), Avennio (Avignon), Apta (Apt), and many others covered the province with a chain of prosperous communities, while the older cities of Tolosa (Toulouse), on the Aquitanian border, Vienna (Vienne), on the Rhone, and Narbo shared in the general development. The Gaul absorbed the Roman in the north; in the south the Roman absorbed the Gaul.

What took place throughout Gaul was repeated across the Pyrenees in the great Spanish peninsula. But while the chief credit for the conquest of Gaul belongs to Julius, that of the final subjugation of Spain, with the exception of the old southern province of Bætica, belongs to Augustus and to his generals. The Republic had sunk millions of money in attempting the conquest of Spain. Army after army had been swallowed up in its plains and hills. It had come to be regarded as the grave of Roman reputations, and more than once the Senate had

almost despaired of success. Triumphs in plenty had been won there and the Republic boasted of two Spanish provinces, but the Iberian peninsula had remained, except along the coast and in Bætica, practically unconquered and unsubdued, and was the natural refuge of lost causes and desperate rebellion. There were, indeed, a few flourishing towns such as Italica, Corduba, Valentia, Gades, and Tarraco. Cnæus Pompeius had freely distributed the citizenship, and Julius, liberal-handed as ever, had followed his rival's example. Yet the whole of Lusitania (Portugal) was in the hands of the natives; the north of Spain was held by the unbroken tribes of Iberians and Galicians; and the vast central districts of the Cantabrians were only quiet while their inhabitants were silently preparing for war. Roman armies had often marched through their midst and received their submission, but at the first favourable opportunity the natives had again sprung to arms. Thus we find that in the period between the death of Julius and the battle of Actium, six Roman governors had won triumphs in Spain, a fact which points, if not to sweeping victories, at least to almost incessant warfare. We have already spoken of Augustus's long stay in Spain from B. C. 27 to 24, years which his lieutenants spent in battle while their chief was planting new colonies and perfecting his organisation of the military lines of communication. No sooner had he returned to Rome than the Cantabrians and Asturians broke out in open revolt, and it was not until the year 19 B. C., when Agrippa was sent to take control of the operations in the

field, that the Cantabrians were finally subdued. Agrippa routed them from their mountain fastnesses and settled them in the plains, and from that time onward there was peace in Spain. The peninsula, which for two hundred years had been the constant theatre of harassing warfare, became the most peaceful portion of the Roman Empire during the next three centuries.

Augustus divided Spain into three provinces. Out of the old inchoate province of Further Spain he carved Bætica, which he soon handed over to the Senate, and Lusitania, which still required a considerable garrison. To Hither Spain he gave the name of Tarraconensis, from its new capital Tarraco, which was the usual port of entry for those who approached the country by sea from Italy. We have the express testimony of Strabo, writing but a few years later, that the natives of Bætica had already adopted the manners and customs of the Romans so thoroughly that they had become strangers to their mother tongue. They were "almost Romans"; they prided themselves on wearing the toga. Augustus dealt generously with them in the bestowal of the Latin rights and the two new burgess-colonies of Hispalis (Seville) and Astigi (Ecija) became fresh centres of Roman influence. Even in Cicero's time Corduba could boast its native literati, who ventured to sing in Roman measures. They excited, it is true, only his derision and contempt, yet a generation later the Roman poets of the Augustan age found no more enthusiastic readers than among the Spanish provincials, who were soon to send to

Rome itself teachers, poets, philosophers, and even emperors. The Roman lives and treasure which had been poured out in Spain were not wasted, for Spain gave new and vigorous blood to the Empire and amply repaid the debt. In Lusitania and Tarraconensis, the Romanising process was more slow but it was none the less sure. Roads were the great highways of civilisation then as railways are now, and Augustus thrust his military roads tirelessly forward, with permanent garrisons planted at the chief strategical points. In the region of the Ebro he set his new colonies at Celsa, Cæsar Augusta, and Dertosa; Legio Septima (Leon) and Asturica (Asturga) mounted guard in the Asturias; while in modern Portugal the familiar names of Lisbon, Badajos, and Merida are but corruptions of the Roman names of the military colonies which overawed the hardy mountaineers of ancient Lusitania. "Fifty tribes which were once constantly at war with one another now live in peace by the side of the Italian colonists," wrote Strabo. "Even so late as the time of Sertorius," says Velleius Paterculus, "it seemed doubtful which was the stronger and which would prove the master, the Roman or the Spaniard. But now the provinces which hardly knew respite from wars of first-class magnitude are so profoundly peaceful that they scarcely harbour a single brigand." There is Velleius's usual note of exaggeration here—the touch of the partisan journalist rather than the sober historian—but the main point is true. Thanks to Augustus, Spain became a source of strength to the Empire instead of weak-



AUGUSTUS AND IMPERIAL ROME.

FROM A REPRODUCTION IN WIESELER'S "DENKMÄLER DER ALTEN KÜNST" OF THE CAMEO IN VENICE.

ness, and, in grateful recognition of her regenerator's work, she continued, down to the late Middle Ages, to reckon the years from the date of his accession and was proud to live under the dispensation of Augustus.



CHAPTER XVI

THE EASTERN FRONTIER

THE problem raised by the Eastern frontier was essentially different from the rest, for here alone Augustus had to deal not with barbarians or semi-barbarians, but with an organised empire —a power with which he could treat according to the usages of diplomacy. That power was Parthia. By the treaties of peace with Parthia made by Cnæus Pompeius, the Euphrates had been fixed as the boundary of Syria as far north as Edessa, and the river, with the Mesopotamian deserts on the eastern bank, formed a natural frontier. But co-terminous with the vassal principalities of Commagene, Cappadocia, Lesser Armenia, and Pontus which stretched from that point to the Euxine lay Armenia, and here was the standing cause of quarrel between Rome and Parthia. Nominally, Armenia was an independent kingdom, with a royal house of its own, but Parthian influence had long been supreme within its borders. Owing to its strategical position, which was exactly similar to that of Afghanistan at the present day in relation to Russian Asia and British India, the policy of Rome was

directed towards making Armenia its ally, so that, in the eventuality of a war with Parthia, the legions might not have to fight their way through the Armenian passes. Roman interests in the country were almost wholly military and strategic; and the Senate had sedulously fostered the formation of a pro-Roman party in Armenia, though it is abundantly clear that the general sympathies of the people favoured the old Parthian alliance. Armenia thus became Roman and Parthian in turn, according as the throne was filled by a Roman or a Parthian nominee.

We have narrated in an earlier chapter the campaigns of Antonius in this region, and have seen how he placed one of his own children by Cleopatra on the Armenian throne. But after the battle of Actium Armenia rose and thrust out the intruder, and the new monarch signalised his accession by a general massacre of the Romans throughout his country, in revenge for the cruel murder of his father by Antonius. It was doubtless expected by public opinion at Rome that Augustus would lose no time in avenging this massacre by leading his legions, fresh from the conquest of Egypt, into Armenia and restoring the Roman ascendency. But he did nothing of the kind. If there was one clear lesson taught by the repeated Eastern campaigns of recent years it was that they pointed straight to disaster. Augustus declined to regard the anti-Parthian policy of Julius and Antonius as an integral part of his inheritance, and he accepted the position as he found it. It was not an heroic policy — Julius would

probably have made the loss of Armenia an immediate *casus belli* with Parthia—but its wisdom was justified by the event. Augustus had the entire Roman world to set in order and was willing to wait until a more convenient season. Yet, though he refrained from war, he came to no definite accommodation with the Parthian King. The loss of the eagles of Crassus at Carrhæ and the two subsequent defeats which had befallen Antonius's lieutenants, Decidius Saxa and Statianus, were blots upon the Roman military honour which had to be wiped out, sooner or later. Public opinion might acquiesce in a temporary, it would not have acquiesced in a permanent, abandonment of Armenia. Augustus, therefore, merely postponed the struggle and remained on the watch for a moment when his hands should be free and Parthia should be weak.

It came at length. There were always Parthian, Armenian, and Median kings in exile, and to these Augustus gave asylum and helped them to foster dissension across the borders. He installed the dispossessed King of the Medes in Lesser Armenia, and lent arms and money to the Parthian pretender, Tiridates. Phraates, anxious for his throne, opened communications with Augustus, who, in turn, pressed for the restoration of the standards of Crassus, but there was no good faith on either side and the negotiations came to nought. However, in B. C. 20 a powerful faction arose in Armenia against the reigning King and sent a deputation to Augustus, begging him to place on the throne Tigranes, the King's brother, who had been brought up in the

palace at Rome. Augustus was then at Samos and acceded to their wishes. He sent a powerful army into Armenia, under the command of his step-son, Tiberius, then twenty-two years of age, and a bloodless victory was obtained. The King of Armenia was murdered by his own relatives; Tigranes received his crown, as a vassal of Rome, from the hands of Tiberius, and the throne of Armenia was once more filled by a Roman feudatory. In the neighbouring country of Media Atropatene another prince, equally friendly to Rome, was installed, and the King of Parthia, alarmed at the presence of the legions upon the Araxes, hastened to make his peace with Augustus. He restored the long-lost standards of Crassus and the remnant of the Roman prisoners who had survived their thirty years' captivity, and the delight of Augustus at having thus rehabilitated the Roman prestige, without risking the desperate uncertainties of war, knew no bounds. The court poets sang their pæans of victory in unmeasured strains; and Augustus sent valuable gifts to the Parthian King. Among his presents was a beautiful Italian woman named Thermusa, who became the favourite mistress of the King and played the part of Roman ambassadress so well that she induced Phraates to send his children as hostages to Rome. In the *Monumentum Ancyranum* Augustus declares that Phraates sought his alliance, not after suffering defeat in war, but of his own free will, by sending the royal children as pledges of his sincerity. It is more probable that the conciliatory attitude of the Parthian was due to

the troubled state of his kingdom, and the fact that the mysterious ambassadors from King Pandion, of Scythia, and King Porus, of India, were seeking alliance with Rome may also have influenced his action.

This settlement of the Eastern Question lasted for about fourteen years. Then the King of Armenia died, and, acting upon the instigation of Parthia, his son assumed the crown without consulting the Roman over-lord. Augustus again ordered Tiberius to lead an expedition thither, but he declined the commission and Varus, who took his place, set Artavasdes on the throne. Artavasdes, however, proved an intractable vassal, and in the year 1 B. C. Augustus despatched the young Caius Cæsar, his eldest grandson by the marriage of Julia and Agrippa, at the head of an important mission to the East. There is a mystery attaching to this mission which has never been cleared up. No expedition which Augustus sanctioned was ever so magniloquently "written up" by the court poets at Rome. They set forth, in the most extravagant vein, the vastness of its scope. Caius — so the world was told — was commissioned not only to set the affairs of Armenia in order, but to lead the Roman armies into Parthia, destroy that empire, penetrate down the valley of the Euphrates to the Persian Gulf, and then conquer and annex Arabia. The campaign, in other words, was to be ordered on such a scale as that on which Alexander or Julius would have conceived it. There is something suspicious in all this bombast, when one remembers the character of Augustus and the extreme

youth of Caius. It was not the wont of the Emperor to trumpet forth his intentions and disclose his plans of campaign; may we not surmise that he was playing a great game at bluff with Parthia? It is difficult on any other theory to explain why two years were thrown away by Caius in Syria, while his tutor, Lollius, intrigued with and received bribes from the Parthian. The young commander-in-chief, who was to emulate the exploits of Alexander, shewed himself much more anxious to negotiate than to fight, and we can hardly doubt that his line of policy was dictated from Rome. A meeting was eventually arranged to take place upon an island in the Euphrates and a treaty was drawn up whereby Phraates pledged himself to interfere no more in the affairs of Armenia, where the timely death of Artavasdes prepared the way for the accession of Tigranes, a prince of the old royal house. War with Parthia, therefore, was again averted by diplomacy, and it is hard to resist the suspicion that this was as agreeable to Augustus as it was to Phraates. All the projects, real or pretended, for a great campaign of conquest in the East fell to the ground, and were heard of no more, and the net result of Caius's mission was the restoration of Armenia to the sphere of Roman influence and a renewed understanding with Parthia which remained unbroken throughout the remainder of Augustus's reign. The Emperor's supreme gratification at this success was tempered only by his grief at the death of Caius, who succumbed after a long illness to the effects of a wound which he had received from a treacherous

Parthian officer before the Armenian stronghold of Artageira.

It is clear, therefore, that the guiding principle of Augustus's Eastern policy was the avoidance of a serious war on any terms short of national dishonour. He rightly judged that the problems of the Danube and the Rhine were of much more vital importance to the Empire than the problems arising out of the Eastern frontier, and that Parthia was only dangerous to an invader and was herself in process of rapid decay. He adopted a strictly conservative attitude and did not seek to extend his boundaries. He might have made Armenia a province; he preferred, as he says in the *Monumentum Ancyranum*, to hand it over to Tigranes. And he was wise, for he had no spare legions to act as its garrison. While, therefore, it cannot be said that Augustus secured a scientific frontier in the East—for the disadvantages of the buffer-state and vassal-kingdom policy are obvious — it was none the less tolerably secure on account of the internal weakness of Parthia. And the rich province of Syria, which, after all, was the Emperor's principal care in this region, was absolutely safeguarded by the Euphrates and the four legions of the Syrian command. Its capital, Antioch, was the third city of the Empire in point of population and almost surpassed Rome itself in its luxury and devotion to pleasure. Syria was a great manufacturing centre; it was the emporium through which passed most of the overland traffic with the Far East, and the Phœnician harbours were busy hives of industry. Poor and desolate though it now

is, in the time of Augustus it was a land overflowing with corn, wine, and oil, and one of the wealthiest provinces of the Empire.

We have already alluded to the vassal kingdoms of the interior of Asia Minor. With the exception of Galatia, which was incorporated in B. C. 25, on the death of King Amyntas, these remained untouched by Augustus. Galatia itself was probably annexed on account of the turbulent condition of Isauria and Pisidia, where the Emperor planted a few small colonies of veterans. The others retained their semi-independence. The remainder of Asia Minor had fallen to the Senate in the great division of the provinces. Cilicia, from its proximity to Syria, was afterwards transferred to the Emperor, but the authority of the Senate was supreme in Asia and Bithynia, in the flourishing Greek cities which fringed the whole coast line, and in the islands of Cyprus and Crete.

The state of Greece calls for a passing word. Hellas had fallen into a most deplorable and desolate condition and the whole of Greece, south of Thessaly, was now known to the Romans by the name of Achaia. Athens, still the home of philosophy and rhetoric, was merely a small university city, a pleasant place of resort and retreat. Her commerce had dwindled to the vanishing point; her harbours at Phalerum were empty of ships; her temples were falling into decay. And her case was typical of the rest. Corinth was in ruins and had never risen from the ashes in which Memmius had laid her. The Peloponnese was a howling wilderness. "*Magnarum*

rerum magna sepulchra vides" — that mournful line, which conjures up before the imagination the graves of dead cities, tells its own tale of silent oracles and vanished polities. Greece had been on the side of Pompeius in the war with Julius; she had been on the side of Antonius in the war with Augustus. She had been stripped bare to furnish supplies for the hosts which had fought out their quarrels in Thessaly, Macedonia, and at Actium, and was now prostrate. To infuse new life into so exhausted a frame was almost hopeless, but Augustus attempted even this. Athens was punished for the favour she had shewn to Antonius and Cleopatra by being deprived of Ægina and Megara; but an additional batch of colonists was sent to Corinth, and new colonies were founded at Patræ and at Buthrotum in Epirus. Augustus had already laid the foundations of a great city at Nicopolis to celebrate his supreme victory, and with that spirit of conservatism which marked all his acts, he re-established the Amphictyonic Council for Greece, Macedonia, and Thessaly. To this Council, however, Nicopolis alone sent six deputies, as many as either Macedonia, or Thessaly; Bœotia, Phocis, and Delphi sent two each; Doris, Athens, Eubœa, Opuntian Locris, and Ozolian Locris had one representative each; while Argos, Sicyon, Corinth, and Megara had to combine to supply a single deputy. There could be no more startling proof of the utter degradation into which the cities of Greece had fallen. The province of Achaia, which at the redistribution of the provinces had been given to the Senate, was, twelve years later,

combined with the imperial province of Macedonia, but was again restored to the Senate by Claudius. Greece had ceased to count, and, alone of all the many provinces of the Roman Empire, she continued to decay. Her sun had set.

Thessaly and Macedonia fared better than the southern portion of the peninsula, and received new colonies of veterans. Thrace, throughout the reign of Augustus, was ruled by native chiefs friendly to Rome and steadily grew more civilised, as the formation of the province of Mœsia and the legions on the Danube protected it from the incursions of the wild tribes of Dacia. The trading cities on the Thracian coast of the Euxine, in the Crimea, and in Colchis maintained a more or less precarious existence in the midst of barbarism and can have contributed little to the revenues of the Empire.



CHAPTER XVII

EGYPT, AFRICA, AND PALESTINE

WHEN Augustus divided the Roman world between himself and the Senate, he carefully excluded from this partition the ancient kingdom of Egypt, which remained during his reign and for several centuries after his death on a different footing from every other province, senatorial or imperial. Though incorporated in the Empire, it never formally ranked as a province. For all practical purposes it was an appanage of the Principate and almost a private estate of the ruling Emperor. Augustus forbade any senator from setting foot upon its soil. He chose its governors from the ranks of the knights, from those, that is to say, who had no *imperium* because they had never held either the prætorship or the consulship. As the conqueror of Cleopatra and the heir by conquest of the Lagid dynasty, he entered into possession of vast royal domains; as the ruler of Egypt he became lord of a patient, industrious, and submissive nation of agriculturists, accustomed by centuries of obedience to pay heavy taxes without a murmur. The fact that the Emperor annually obtained from

the Nile land twenty million bushels of wheat—a third part of the entire consumption of the capital—as well as an enormous tribute in hard cash, explains why he and his successors attached such prime importance to Egypt and took such extraordinary care over the details of its administration. The general who held Egypt held one of the keys of Rome. This was one of the fundamental principles of imperial policy. Augustus did wisely, therefore, to keep the Egyptian governorship—a post of such magnitude that Strabo said, "the official, who is sent to Egypt, occupies the place of a King"—for members of his own entourage, upon whose fidelity he could place the most absolute reliance. Cornelius Gallus, who had accompanied Augustus to Alexandria after the battle of Actium, was the first imperial prefect of Egypt, and the position seems to have turned his brain. We are told that he carried his presumption to the point of having his name inscribed upon the Pyramids, not in the stupid, but harmless, spirit which has prompted countless generations of tourists to imitate his example, but in the spirit of overweening vanity which is bred in small minds by a sense of power. Gallus fell from favour. He was disgraced and ordered back to Rome for trial, where the Emperor bitterly complained of his ingratitude and malevolence. Yet, when it seemed likely that the Senate would pass a harsh sentence upon him, Augustus declared that he was the only man in Rome to whom it was not permitted to be angry with his friends.

Augustus's policy in Egypt, as elsewhere, was to

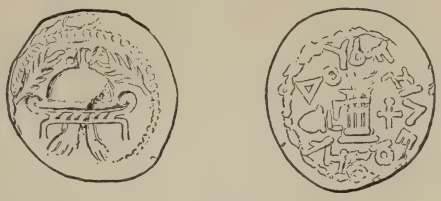
interfere as little as possible with existing institutions, social, economic, and political. There had been no self-government under the Ptolemies like that which the Romans had found in Syria. The country had been parcelled out into thirty-six districts or nomes, the entire administration of which was conducted by royal officials. Practically the only change made by Augustus was to install Roman officials and to divert the revenues into his own exchequer. He did not seek to Romanise the country, for not a single colony was planted within its borders ; his main object was merely to keep the milch cow in good condition. Then, as now, the prosperity of the land depended upon two conditions,—the annual overflow of the Nile and the system of irrigation works. When Augustus set his legions—greatly, no doubt, to their annoyance and disgust—to clean out the canals which the luxurious and effeminate Ptolemies had allowed to become choked with mud, he gave signal proof that he understood the needs of Egypt. The result was, that, whereas when the Romans incorporated the country it required a Nile overflow of fourteen cubits to ensure a full harvest, it soon only required an overflow of twelve, and the eight cubits which previously had spelt famine now represented a fair and sufficient harvest.

Augustus not only saw the commercial and strategical importance of Egypt but embarked upon very speculative military operations in Arabia in order to destroy a commercial rival. The campaign of Ælius Gallus in 25 B.C. is inexplicable except on the

supposition that it was a trade war. There were two main trading routes between India and Europe. One lay along the valley of the Euphrates through Parthia into Syria; the other passed through Arabia and what is now the province of Yemen. The ruins of immense reservoirs cut out of the solid rock at Aden still bear witness to the vanished civilisation which once flourished in this barren region, and the name of Arabia Felix attests its wealth and importance in Roman times. From the cities of the Yemen the caravan route traversed the Arabian shore of the Red Sea, through Leuce Come (the modern Havara) to Berenice at the head of the Sinaitic peninsula, and thence crossed the Idumæan desert to Petra, the capital of the Nabatæan Syrians, and so to the ports of Gaza and Rhinocolura. This route did not touch Egypt at all; and the alternative route from Berenice across the Sinaitic peninsula to Arsinoe, close by the modern Suez, whence goods might be conveyed through the canal—dug ages before by an enlightened Pharaoh — which connected the Salt Lakes with the Nile, and so down to the sea at Pelusium, was little used because the canal was choked. Augustus's main efforts were directed to the reopening of a third, but also disused, route to the Far East which avoided the long tracks across the deserts of Arabia. It lay up the Nile as far as Coptos, near Thebes. There goods were transported over the desert to the Red Sea either to Myos Hormos, to Leucos Limen, or to Berenice Troglodytice, the three Egyptian ports of the Red Sea, whence they might be shipped direct to their

destinations. The pirates of the Arabian Gulf were rigorously suppressed and we are told that fleets of a hundred and twenty sail used to leave annually for India from the port of Myos Hormos alone in the latter days of Augustus.

Here then we have a clear explanation of the cause which led to the campaign of Ælius Gallus. The active development of this Nile and over-sea route threatened to ruin the carrying trade of the Homerites in Arabia Felix and they doubtless retaliated by harrying the Egyptian merchantmen. An expedition to reduce them to subjection was the natural result. It proved a most inglorious fiasco, for it was wretchedly mismanaged by the Roman commander. He had collected a fleet of 80 warships and 130 transports, together with an army of 10,000 men and contingents furnished by the Nabatæans and the Jews, and set sail from Arsinoe. But instead of being taken direct to its objective the force was landed at Leuce Come, half-way down the Red Sea, and spent 180 days in reaching Mariaba, the capital of the Sabæans, to which Gallus laid siege. During these six months, his army had been wasted by the diseases which are endemic in the country, and by the enormous difficulties incident to campaigning in the desert, and so after spending six days before the walls of Mariaba, Gallus ordered a retreat, and the army retraced its steps to Leuce Come, having accomplished nothing, and without even reaching the Homerite territory. No second expedition for the conquest of Arabia was attempted by Augustus, but there is reason to believe that, before



COIN OF HEROD THE GREAT.



COIN OF DRUSUS AND TIBERIUS.



COIN OF ANTONIA AUGUSTA.



COIN OF CAIUS CÆSAR.

the close of his reign, a Roman fleet made its way down to Aden and reduced that city to the position of a mere village. Certainly the Red Sea became Roman water and the trade of the Far East was largely diverted from the old caravan route through Arabia into the Egyptian ports and the Nile route, to the great profit of the Egyptian revenue. The southern border of Egypt was fixed at Syene, where the first cataract interrupted the navigability of the Nile, and Augustus steadily refused to listen to the advocates of a forward policy against Æthiopia. When Gaius Petronius had beaten back the armies of the Æthopian Queen, who had taken advantage of the absence of Ælius Gallus in Arabia to raid across the border, Augustus declined even to demand tribute or formal submission. In the closing years of his reign, when his legions were hard pressed on the Rhine and the Danube, he must have congratulated himself upon his wise determination not to be drawn into the deserts of the Soudan.

His policy in Africa was guided by similar considerations. The Atlas mountains in the far west and the great deserts of the Sahara formed a natural boundary across which he was not tempted to pass. But, even within these limits, there was much work to be done. The Republic had not conquered the whole of the Mediterranean littoral. Practically the only portions which were thoroughly Roman were the ancient territory of Carthage and the Pentapolis of the Cyrenaica. The Roman province of Africa was rich in grain but its compass was small and it was hemmed in on the land side by the kingdom of

Numidia, with which the Republic had been constantly at war. To the west lay the two Mauretanian kingdoms, afterwards known as Mauretania Tingitana and Mauretania Cæsariensis. When, after the battle of Thapsus, the larger part of Numidia, which formed the hinterland of Roman Africa, was incorporated into that province, the two Mauretanian kings, who had supported Julius, were rewarded by an increase of territory. Subsequently, in the quarrels between Antonius and Octavian, Bogud espoused the cause of the former and lost his throne, which was given to Bocchus. The latter died in B.C. 33, and the whole of Western Africa was bestowed by Augustus in B.C. 25 upon the son of the last king of Numidia, who had been brought up at Rome under the guidance of Augustus and had been married to a daughter of Cleopatra and Antonius. The young Juba amply fulfilled the trust reposed in him. He, and his son after him, continued to rule Mauretania as vassals of the Roman Emperor, until Caligula summoned Ptolemæus to Rome, put him to death, seized his treasure, and annexed his kingdom.

The only campaign of note waged in North Africa during the reign of Augustus took place in what is now Tripoli, the eastern part of the senatorial province of Africa. Lucius Cornelius Balbus penetrated into the Sahara in B.C. 19 as far as the oasis of Fezzan and annexed the district. His was the last senatorial triumph. Henceforward the distinction was reserved for those who wore the purple or belonged to the reigning house. Cyrenaica, which, together with the island of Crete, formed another senatorial province,

is scarcely mentioned throughout this period. But beyond doubt the beginning of the imperial administration witnessed a remarkable revival of prosperity all along the southern shore of the Mediterranean. Augustus sent a new detachment of veterans to Carthage to strengthen the colony which Julius had planted there and Carthage speedily became, for the second time, the Queen of Africa, rivalling even Alexandria in opulence and in the volume of its trade. And while Alexandria continued to be essentially Hellenistic, Carthage was Roman to the core. A number of settlements, with Latin rights, were formed not only on the coast but far in the interior, and the Romanisation of Northern Africa proceeded as rapidly as that of Gallia Narbonensis or Bætica. Its civilisation was destined to be blotted out absolutely by barbarism just when it was in the height of its glory, but its sand-strewn ruins still testify to the completeness of the Roman occupation and to the marvellous prosperity which it attained as early as the days of the Antonines.

The affairs of Judæa and Palestine also claim attention, by reason of the special interest which attaches to this relatively insignificant quarter of the Empire, as the birthplace of Christ and as the home of the race which proved so sharp a thorn in the side of the Roman government. It does not fall within the limits of this volume to trace the downfall of the Maccabean family and the rise to power of the blood-stained and ferocious, yet capable and astute, Herod, who was known even to his contemporaries as Herod the Great. During his entire career, Herod

remained consistently faithful to the party which ruled the East. He was a Cæsarian while Julius lived; when Cassius was arming the East for the Republic, he too was on the Republican side; when Octavian and Antonius divided the world, he ranged himself under the standard of Antonius. Always a vassal king, he accepted without demur the foreign policy of his master of the moment, and even though Antonius lavished some of Herod's southern districts upon Cleopatra and her children, the supple Idumæan acquiesced with a good grace and employed his soldiers to collect the tribute for her. So that he kept his crown, Herod's loyalty was beyond reproach. Then, when the fortunes of Antonius sank at Actium, and the victor was preparing to invade Egypt, Herod was swift to enter into negotiations with Octavian and transfer his allegiance to the new over-lord. His capacity was well known and his power was considerable; Octavian was anxious to keep the Jews quiet, and gladly accepted the overtures of Herod, whose kingdom was subsequently extended by the inclusion of Joppa and Gaza on the south and by the incorporation of the districts of Ituræa, Batanea, Auranitis, and Trachonitis, which lay east of the Sea of Galilee and stretched north to Damascus. In other words, he ruled over the whole of Palestine in its greatest extent, and none of the other semi-independent kings of the East enjoyed such liberty of action and so many privileges as he. Judæa proper paid no tribute to Rome, whatever imposts were levied on the other districts, and the central government pursued a rigid policy of non-

interference. Augustus, we may suspect, was only too glad to be relieved from the duty of directly governing what Cicero years before had described as a suspicious and spiteful state — *tam suspitiosa ac maledica civitas.* Herod made an admirable Warden of the March, or, in more homely phrase, a trustworthy watch-dog at the gates of Egypt. There was little profit to be wrung out of Palestine, and Jews in their own country were harmless as long as they were left to themselves. Unfortunately, however, both for Rome and Palestine, Herod's rule was detested by his Jewish subjects. Though he raised their status among the nations, the fierce national spirit of the priestly theocracy was against him. Herod was only half a Jew; his sympathies were Hellenist; and while he rebuilt the Temple on a most magnificent scale he also introduced into Jerusalem a circus and an amphitheatre — things which were anathema to the fanatical priests.

His united kingdom was divided at his death in B.C. 4 among his three sons, Philip, Antipas, and Archelaus, neither of whom inherited the capacity of his father. Archelaus, in Judæa, began his reign by appointing a new High Priest who was obnoxious to the people of Jerusalem and the inevitable tumult followed. Varus, the Roman Governor of Syria, was obliged to intervene to restore order, and a deputation of Jews was sent to petition Augustus at Rome. The Emperor confirmed, in the main, the testament of Herod, while withholding the kingly title from Archelaus, but soon found it necessary to depose him, and, in answer to the solicitations of

the Jews themselves, Judæa was declared in A.D. 6 a Roman province of the second rank, an annexe, as it were, of the province of Syria. A small Roman garrison took up its quarters in the castle at Jerusalem, but Cæsarea was the centre of the Roman administration. The arrangements made by Augustus for the government of Judæa were equitable and just. The tribute, of course, was exacted as in every other Roman province; but the urban communities were granted self-government and Jerusalem was left to the control of the Jewish Sanhedrin with complete judicial and executive authority, subject only to the confirmation of the death sentence by the Roman procurator. The Emperor carefully respected the religious prejudices of the Jews, to which they attached far higher importance than to the good government of their land. Special coins were struck which did not bear the effigy of the Emperor; the troops left their eagles and standards at Cæsarea before marching to Jerusalem; Augustus and Livia sent sumptuous gifts to the Temple and paid the cost of daily sacrifice on the great altar; and it was made a crime punishable by death for a Gentile — even if he were a Roman citizen — to profane the inner court by entering it. Such enactments shew the extraordinary pains taken by the central government to conciliate the Jews and to prevent the Roman yoke — imposed, be it noted, at their own request — from chafing their necks. Many a Roman procurator of Judæa found himself sacrificed in the vain hope of placating the Jewish national sentiment.

Such then was the policy of Augustus towards the

Jews in their own country. While the strong man, Herod the Great, lived, he was well satisfied that another should rule so stubborn a race; when Herod died and the incapacity of his sons became manifest, he sought to secure at least a tolerable working arrangement by strict non-interference in the internal affairs of Judæa, provided there was no actual revolt. Yet he must have felt that just as Druid worship was the storm centre in Gaul, so the fierce uncompromising character of the Jewish religion was the storm centre in the East, and that, sooner or later, it would have to be crushed in its home at Jerusalem by the whole might of Rome. The Jewish problem, however, was by no means confined to the barren hills and deserts of Palestine. The Jews were scattered throughout the Empire, clannish and exclusive beyond any people that the world had ever seen, forming colonies of their own in every great city, submissive to the law, intent only upon money-making, and anti-social to a man. The uneasy distrust and suspicion with which they were regarded by the Romans were perfectly natural. The Jews took no part in the life of the communities into which they had thrust themselves. They held aloof from the festivals; they did not aspire to obtain the citizenship, for its privileges entailed obligations and expense. Cicero, in a striking passage in the *Pro Flacco*, which goes to the very root of this distrust, had declared that the Jewish religion looked askance at the splendour of the Roman Republic, at the majesty of the Roman name, and at the time-honoured institutions of Rome. Even the

poorest Jew despised the Roman gods and the civilising mission of Rome, and despised, while accepting, the toleration which was offered him. The cultured Roman in return was contemptuous of the one jealous and conquered deity who would not fraternise with his brother divinities, while the poorer Roman hated the morose Semite whom he could not understand. The Jews formed practically an *imperium in imperio*, paying the annual tribute of a double drachma to the funds of the foreign temple at Jerusalem — a mysterious race, which, by its very persistence, inspired not only hate but fear.

They were now securely planted in the East, notably in Alexandria and the Greek cities of Asia Minor; and there was a colony of eight thousand Jews in Rome itself. Augustus, continuing the policy of Julius, which in this respect had been the policy of Alexander the Great, confirmed the eastern Jews in their old privileges and gave them more. They were exempted from military service; the strict regulations against corporate societies and unions were abated in their favour; and, when the Greek communities of Asia Minor sought to include them in the general levy, Augustus expressly ratified the Jewish protest. In Alexandria and Cyrene the Jews had an ethnarch of their own; in Antioch, Ephesus, and other cities they enjoyed a similarly favoured position. It would seem almost as if Augustus set himself to make the Jews of the Diaspora pro-Roman, as a counterpoise in some degree to the prevailing Hellenism of the East. They had no political organisation; their interests were entirely

centred in their trade and their religion. But he adopted a different policy towards them in the West. There is no evidence that he imposed any check upon their freedom of movement, but certainly in no western city do we find them possessing the practical autonomy which they enjoyed in Alexandria. A sharp distinction was drawn between the provinces of Western Europe, which it was the aim of the Emperor to Romanise, and the provinces of the East, which had been thoroughly Hellenised long before the Romans set foot within them.

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CHAPTER XVIII

THE DANUBE AND THE RHINE

IT remains to consider the policy of Augustus in relation to the northern frontier of the Empire. Elsewhere he practically accepted the boundaries which had been bequeathed to him by Julius and the Republic; here he marked out new frontiers of his own and engaged, sometimes vigorously, sometimes reluctantly, in the work of expansion. It will be most convenient in the course of this chapter to present a brief connected story of the wars which he waged in order to thrust forward his boundaries to the Danube, the Rhine delta, and the German Ocean. We shall then see the legions advance through Germany to the Weser and the Elbe, and finally, after suffering one great military disaster, draw back to the valley of the Rhine.

The Republic had looked to the North with eyes apprehensive of barbaric invasion rather than eager with the hope of conquest. There had, it is true, been endless petty wars in the province of Cisalpine Gaul on the southern slopes of the Alps, and constant campaigns at the head of the Adriatic against the tribes of Illyricum. But, broadly speaking, one

may say that the Republic had been content to allow the northern regions of Italy to remain in the hands of the hill men, who, from time to time, pillaged and harried the dwellers in the valleys, even when the Roman arms were subduing powerful nations in Spain, Africa, and the East. Italy, in fact, was not mistress of her own household until the time of Augustus, and he had started his career of conquest, not in the North but in the North-east, and had begun his long series of annexations by moving towards the Danube. As far back as B.C. 35, Augustus had undertaken his first campaign in Pannonia against the Iapydes, and advanced to the Save, where he captured the Pannonian capital of Siscia, and, in the course of the next two years, settled a number of military posts along the coasts of Istria and Dalmatia. This occupation of part of Pannonia was intended primarily to prepare the way for a campaign against the Dacians, who were threatening the security of Macedonia and the coast towns of Thrace. In the *Monumentum Ancyranum* Augustus declares that he never waged war in a wanton spirit of conquest, and Suetonius similarly states that he never took up arms "without just and necessary cause." We know so little of what took place behind the screen of the Alps and the Danube that it is almost impossible to discuss the justice of this claim. The fact seems to be that threatening confederations of the tribes were formed periodically, as capable warriors rose to power amongst them, and that the Romans and friendly natives who dwelt on the borders were constantly menaced by a flood

of barbarian invasion. The client states of Rome clamoured for protection, and even in the time of Julius, the Dacians, under Burebista, had swept down as far as Apollonia in a great devastating raid. Antonius himself had helped to drive them back, and then Augustus, when his hands were free after the battle of Actium, sent, in B.C. 29, his lieutenant, Marcus Licinius Crassus, to inflict the punishment which had been so long delayed. The expedition was successful; the King of the Bastarnæ was defeated and slain; Crassus advanced to the Danube in its lower reaches, and the foundations were laid of what subsequently became the province of Mœsia. The tribes suffered so severely that we hear of no more campaigns in that region until, after the lapse of seventeen years, the barbarians on the farther side of the Danube once more collected for a rush across the river.

Augustus then proceeded to break up the hill tribes which dwelt among the Rhætian and Cottian Alps. The task was one which could no longer be postponed. Rome needed a secure and direct highway into Gaul, and the passes were in the hands of warlike peoples, as difficult to deal with and as little to be depended upon as the Afridis and Waziris on the north-west frontiers of India. One tribe alone was spared, in recognition of the loyalty of its King, Cottius, who, under Roman direction, opened out a great road over Mt. Cenis. Cottius's capital lay at Segusio (Suse), and the two new Roman colonies founded by Augustus at Saluces and Augusta Taurinorum (Turin) were, doubtless,

potent influences in keeping him faithful to his allegiance. Farther north among the Graian Alps, lay the Salassi, watched by a Roman colony at Eporedia. These were destroyed root and branch. In B.C. 25 Marcus Terentius Varro defeated them in battle and the entire nation of forty-four thousand was sold into slavery in the market-place of Eporedia, with the stipulation that the purchasers should remove them far from their native hills and not grant them their liberty for the space of twenty years. The severity of this punishment is perhaps incapable of justification, but it at least solved the problem of the protection of the military roads which Augustus now built over the Little St. Bernard to Lugdunum, the capital of Gaul, and over the Great St. Bernard to the Lake of Geneva and the Rhine. Three thousand prætorians were settled at Augusta Prætoria (Aosta), and a few years later the campaigns of Publius Silius against some of the lesser tribes completed the conquest of the whole region. A great trophy was erected at Segusio to commemorate this series of minor but useful campaigns and the names of forty-four conquered nations were inscribed upon its arch.

But Augustus was not satisfied with having gained possession of the southern slopes of the Alps. One conquest led on to another and in B.C. 15 he commissioned his two step-sons, Tiberius and Drusus, to penetrate into Rhætia and Vindelicia. The operations were most skilfully carried out. Drusus entered Rhætia from the south and, advancing up the valley of the Adige, crossed

the Brenner Pass and defeated the Rhætians in what is now the Austrian Tyrol; while Tiberius, moving with a second army from Gaul, fell upon the Vindelici in their rear. In a naval battle on Lake Constance the Roman triremes overwhelmed the barbarian flotillas, and the two imperial armies marched without mishap from victory to victory through some of the most difficult country in Europe. Horace, in one of his finest odes, celebrated the glories of Drusus's campaign with genuine enthusiasm, and reflected the proud confidence of the Roman world that there was no military operation beyond the powers of the Claudian house. "*Nil Claudiæ non perficient manus.*" The empire seemed safe which was supported by two such imperial pillars, and by an Emperor so discerning of genius in the younger branches of his family.

Thus, for the first time, the northern slopes of the Alps became Roman territory, and Roman influence spread along the middle reaches of the Danube. In accordance with his usual practice, Augustus sought to break the power of the tribes by settling them in the valleys and by the foundation of military colonies; while the outpost of the Empire at this period was fixed at Augusta Vindelicum (Augsburg) a few miles south of the Danube. Apparently without the need of another campaign, the spacious district lying to the east of Rhætia, with the Danube for its northern and Pannonia for its eastern boundary, became the province of Noricum. On the western side, the dangerous gap of open coun-



TIBERIUS.

FROM THE STATUE IN THE VATICAN MUSEUM, ROME.

try lying between the Danube and the Rhine was protected by settlements of Gallic colonists, transplanted thither from beyond the Rhine, and the region was known as "the tithe lands" or *Agri Decumates*. Yet much hard fighting lay before the Roman legions and there were many hours of cruel anxiety in store for Augustus before the Danube along its whole course became the frontier of the Empire. The province of Illyricum remained for many years an open sore. In the campaign of 35 Augustus had not advanced beyond the Save, and the wild Pannonian tribes had not been thoroughly crushed. Their marauding bands evaded the Roman legions and constantly poured down upon the Adriatic. In B.C. 13, the situation was sufficiently serious to call for the presence of Agrippa, and upon his death the disturbances broke out anew. Tiberius was despatched thither at the head of a large army and, while his brother, Drusus, waged successful and aggressive war in North Germany, he conducted three campaigns in Pannonia from B.C. 12–10. The result was an advance from the Save to the Drave and the headquarters were removed from Siscia to Poetovio (Pettau), while Carnuntum on the Danube, close to the modern city of Vienna, became the station of the Norican legion. The great bend of the Danube does not seem to have been occupied, and its incorporation took place later. Simultaneously with the revolt of the Pannonians came the rising in Thrace, where the native pro-Roman party was expelled and the tribes penetrated into Macedonia. Happily, however,

Lucius Piso, the Governor of Pamphylia, who was sent to take command of the Roman troops, proved himself equal to the emergency. The invaders were driven back and Augustus placed Rhœmetalces upon the throne of Thrace. From B.C. 9 to A.D. 6 we hear nothing of the movements of the legions on the Danubian frontier. Rhætia, Noricum, Pannonia, Mœsia, — the whole chain of new border provinces from west to east, — were outwardly peaceful and the natives seemed to have resigned themselves to the Roman rule.

But they were still to make one last desperate struggle for freedom, which taxed to the very utmost the military strength of Rome. The rising was exceedingly well timed. In A.D. 6 Augustus, emboldened by the apparently complete subjection of North Germany, had commissioned Tiberius to invade the territory of Maroboduus, the King of the Marcomanni, who held what is now Bohemia. It was decided to employ not only the Rhenish legions, but the whole army of the Danube, inasmuch as the main invasion was to take place from the southern side. Tiberius, therefore, advanced to Carnuntum with six legions, denuding the garrison towns of troops as he marched north and calling upon the native levies to join him. The levies collected but, instead of moving to Carnuntum, they raised the standard of revolt and in an instant the whole of Pannonia and Dalmatia was ablaze. According to the Roman estimates, the insurgents mustered 200,000 infantry and 9000 horsemen, who spread over the provinces, murder-

ing every Roman who fell into their hands and destroying in a few weeks the patient labour of many years. The situation was indeed critical. Tiberius, with his army, was absolutely cut off from his base. He was confronted by Maroboduus and the Marcomanni; his rear was threatened by the rebels, and, as though to crown the misfortunes of Rome, the Dacians burst across the Danube and overran the province of Mœsia. Only the Thracian King Rhœmetalces remained true to his allegiance and helped to stem the raging torrent.

Rome was in a fever of apprehension similar to that which had prevailed in the days of Marius, when the Cimbri were pouring through the passes of Cisalpine Gaul. It was fully believed that the barbarians of Dalmatia were on their way to Italy, and there was hardly a single legion to intercept their march. The dangers of the policy, deliberately adopted by Augustus, of removing as far as possible from the seat of empire the great military commands were now made manifest. Hurriedly, therefore, new levies were raised. The veterans were summoned to resume their armour; and not only freedmen but slaves, enfranchised by the State on their enrolment, were pressed into the legions. Augustus himself warned the Senate that unless they rose to the emergency they might see within ten days the barbarians at their gates, and Velleius declares that even the cool and collected Emperor, familiar as he was with desperate crises, shared the panic which fell upon Italy. The

peril was instant and, if Maroboduus had boldly advanced to attack Tiberius and had made common cause with the Pannonians and Dalmatians, the Roman arms might have suffered a grave disaster. But the good fortune of Rome came once again to her succour. Tiberius, fully realising his desperate position, immediately opened negotiations with the enemy who faced him. His overtures were not repulsed; an accommodation was arrived at; the Marcomanni remained tranquil; and Tiberius was left free to employ his legions in quelling the revolt in his rear. Troops from the transmarine provinces were hastily despatched to his assistance, while the new Italian levies, under the command of the young Germanicus, crossed the border and pressed back the insurgent bands. Tiberius seems to have marched down to Siscia on the Save, where he was within easy communication with Rome, and to have gathered into winter quarters a vast army of fifteen legions and an equal number of auxiliaries, by whose help, during the following summer, he broke the back of the rebellion. Three campaigns, however, were found necessary before the task was completed and the Pannonian leaders sued for peace and pardon.

The progress of those campaigns need not be followed in detail, but Suetonius lays stress, in his *Life* of Tiberius, on the enormous difficulties which the Roman general had to overcome, partly due to the character of the country and partly to the problem of providing supplies for so large a force. He adds, too, the striking sentence: "Though Tiberius was con-

stantly receiving messages of recall, he stuck to his work, fearing lest the enemy, still hovering round him in strength, should fall upon his army if he made a backward movement." So, too, Dion Cassius declares that Augustus suspected Tiberius of deliberately prolonging the war, in order that he might remain at the head of his powerful force. But whatever motives were uppermost in the mind of the Emperor — and it may be pointed out that Tiberius himself in after years adopted a precisely similar attitude towards Germanicus — there is no doubt that Tiberius shewed a true discernment of the necessities of the situation in teaching the insurgents a lesson which they never forgot. Half-conquests were futile in dealing with the tribesmen of Dalmatia and Pannonia, and three years were well spent in bringing them to their knees. They submitted in detachments, but large numbers continued to wage guerilla warfare long after all hope of national independence had vanished. The chieftain Bato was one of the last to yield, and on being brought into the presence of Tiberius and asked what had prompted him to revolt, he replied that Rome herself was responsible for the insurrection because she had sent wolves instead of shepherds to protect her sheep. Whether the tribute exacted by the Emperor from these Danubian provinces had been excessive, or whether the imperial tax-collectors had fleeced the natives, we cannot say. Similar excuses for revolt have often been put forward simply to cover an incurable objection to paying any taxes at all, however moderate, and we

may more probably attribute this dangerous rebellion, "the most dangerous," in the carefully weighed words of Suetonius, "since the Punic wars," to the fierce spirit of nationality which made a last gigantic effort to win back a lost independence. When Tiberius at length returned to Rome, the victories he had won were consolidated by Germanicus and the new province of Pannonia became one of the chief recruiting grounds of the Roman auxiliary army. Rome, too, found an able soldier, outside the Imperial family, in Gnæus Lentulus, the Governor of Mœsia. He not only repulsed the Dacians, who had crossed the frozen Danube in its lower reaches, but himself led for the first time a Roman army into Dacian territory, signally defeated the Getæ and Bastarnæ, and carried back with him across the river fifty thousand Dacian captives, whom he settled in Thrace. During the short remainder of Augustus's reign there was peace on the Danube.

But there was war on the Rhine. No sooner had Rome begun its rejoicings over the pacification of Pannonia than the dreadful tidings arrived from Germany that Quintilius Varus had suffered an overwhelming disaster, that the general was dead, and that his entire army of three legions, three regiments of auxiliaries, and six cohorts had been cut to pieces by the German barbarians. Let us then turn to the Gallic frontier and recount the circumstances which culminated in this staggering defeat and the wreck of many of Augustus's most cherished hopes. We have seen in a previous chapter how the Emperor had made the Rhine the east-

MAP TO ILLUSTRATE THE RHINE FRONTIER.



London: Stanford's Geogl Estabt

ern frontier of Gaul. It seems probable, though on this point the authorities are silent, that during the early part of his reign Augustus had no thought of penetrating far across the river into the territory of the Germans. His main object had been rather to secure the Gallic provinces from invasion than to extend his borders. But as time went on, and his troops began to push north—still on the left bank—into the Netherlands, and as he found that he could not safely ignore what transpired upon the right bank of the river, he was insensibly drawn into adopting a forward Germanic policy. Then, as his proverbial good fortune continued to attend him and his first ventures across the stream proved successful, it would appear that Augustus decided to advance his frontier, first from the Rhine to the Weser, and then from the Weser to the Elbe. By so doing he would remove all pressure from Gaul, and he had fair grounds for hope that the signal triumph which had crowned his conciliatory policy towards the Gallic cantons would be repeated among the German tribes. This we believe to be the true explanation of the course which events took in the Rhineland. Having gone so far, Augustus found himself compelled to go still farther and annex in spite of himself. Again the parallels of British annexations in India and Burmah and of the Russian advance in Central Asia leap to the mind. Conquering states are driven forward by their own momentum quite as much as by carefully calculated reasons of policy, whenever they come in contact with less highly organised communities. It is also

to be remembered that when great armies are collected in standing camps along a frontier their commanding officers invariably chafe at inaction and impress upon the home government the feasibility of further advance. In the case of the armies of the Rhine, those commanders were Princes of the Imperial House, eager to shew themselves worthy and capable in the old Roman way—the way of military conquest. And the Emperor himself, cautious though he was, knew that a series of brilliant victories, gained by the younger members of his family, was at once the shortest road to popular favour and the most effective method of silencing criticism at home. It is at least significant that no great forward movement on a large scale took place upon the Rhine until B.C. 12, when the young Prince, Drusus, made his first Germanic campaign.

This was not, of course, the first occasion on which Romans and Germans had faced one another in the field. Agrippa had crossed the Rhine as early as 38 B.C. in order to protect the friendly clan of the Ubii from the attacks of their kinsmen and to facilitate their transference to the left bank. In B.C. 25 a punitive expedition had been undertaken to avenge the massacre of some Roman merchants. Five years later the presence of Agrippa had again been required to expel an irruption of German tribes, and in 16 B.C. the Sugambri, Usipites, and Tencteri had crossed the river in force at various points and raided far and wide in the province of Belgica. They inflicted a humiliating defeat upon the Fifth Legion, commanded by Marcus Lollius.

Compared with the annihilation of the army of Varus, twenty-five years later, this was justly described by Suetonius as "*majoris infamiæ quam detrimenti*"—a blow to Rome's prestige rather than to her military strength—for it was speedily repaired by the presence of Augustus and Agrippa, who hurried to the scene with powerful reinforcements, only to find that the invaders retreated hastily before them without offering battle. But the unsoldierly behaviour of the Fifth Legion in the face of the enemy and the loss of its eagle made a painful impression upon public opinion, and it was to wipe out the memory of this military disgrace that Augustus sanctioned the aggressive campaign undertaken by Drusus in B.C. 12, after his victories in Rhætia and Vindelicia.

Such a campaign, however, was not undertaken for sentimental reasons alone. The Germans had once more assumed the offensive. United in a powerful confederacy, consisting of the Sugambri, the Cherusci, and the leading Suebian tribes, with the exception of the Chatti, they again crossed the Rhine, so confident of victory that they had already agreed among themselves as to the division of the spoils. But Drusus was more than a match for the German chieftains. He drove the invaders back, ravaged the territory of the Sugambri and the Usipites from Cologne to Nimeguen, and then, when the confederacy had dissolved under the stress of defeat, he proceeded to carry out his own plan of campaign. This was to establish the Roman arms along the North Sea coast to the mouths of the

Weser and the Elbe by means of a joint naval and military expedition. Such a scheme must have been maturing for some years. From the fact that the Batavian tribes in the Rhine delta offered no opposition, and that the Frisians actually assisted in the expedition, we may suppose that Drusus's emissaries had been busy amongst them, purchasing their support against their neighbours, in accordance with the traditional policy of Julius, which had facilitated his conquest of Gaul. Still stronger evidence is found in the circumstance that Drusus had gathered a large flotilla of transports and that a canal had been dug from the Rhine to the Zuyder Zee (Lacus Flevus) to avoid, as far as possible, the perils of the open sea. The expedition proved successful. The fleet of the Bructeri was defeated in the river Ems; and Drusus reached in safety the mouth of the Weser. Then, while returning by the way it had come, his fleet ran aground on the Frisian coast, and, but for the help of the natives, would have suffered disaster. By this campaign Drusus gained new allies for Rome and a hold over the North Coast. In the following year (B.C. 11) he began his great invasion of Germany proper. Again the dissensions of the German tribes were of the greatest service to Rome. While Drusus had been absent in the North Sea the Sugambri had invaded the adjoining territory of the Chatti. Seizing their chance, the legions stationed on the Rhine had moved into the vacant territory, and Drusus, on his return, marched triumphantly to the Weser without having to fight any important action. While returning to winter quarters with his

main army he came within an ace of destruction at Arbalo,—the site of which defies identification,—where only the overconfidence of the Germans saved him from annihilation.

In the following year (B.C. 10) the Chatti were conquered; in B.C. 9 the Marcomanni withdrew into Bohemia and the victorious Drusus continued his triumphal progress from the Weser to the Elbe, through the territory of the Cherusci. There the legions halted, but on their way back they suffered an irreparable loss in the death of their gallant and youthful commander. Drusus was thrown from his horse and, after suffering the agony of a broken thigh for thirty days, died, to the grief of his soldiers and of the whole Roman world. His elder brother, Tiberius, hastened north to take over the command and, during the next two years, carried on with vigour the work which Drusus had begun. In five years, therefore, Rome had asserted her mastery over the vast expanse which was bounded by the Rhine, the North Sea, the Elbe, and the Saal, and the exploits of Julius in Gaul had been repeated in Germany. We may be tolerably certain that the Emperor and his ministers believed that a vast new province had been added to the Empire. They thought that the frontier had been permanently thrown forward to the Elbe, and that the next move of the legions would be to advance southward from the Saal into Bohemia, until they reached the Danube on the bank opposite to the new Roman territory of Vindelicia. Warned by his experiences in Pannonia and Illyricum, Augustus was probably

quite prepared for spasmodic insurrection, and the fact that no standing camp was established for the troops to the east of Aliso, on the Ems, shews that the Emperor proceeded with caution. But the peace which reigned in Germany during the next few years must have been very flattering to his hopes. He transplanted the irreconcilable Sugambri across to the very seaboard of Gaul and settled among the Gallic cantons a number of the Suebian tribes. He thus removed all danger of German irruptions into Gaul, and, by creating a pro-Roman party among the princely houses of the Cherusci, gradually extended his sway over the heart of Germany. The legions marched east every summer to put down insurrection and disorder, returning every autumn to their winter quarters on the Ems and the Rhine. It seemed as though the Romanisation of Germany would involve no greater difficulties than had been successfully surmounted elsewhere.

Tiberius had laid down the German command in B.C. 6; he resumed it in A.D. 4, on his reconciliation with Augustus and his restoration to favour. It was the post which needed the ablest general and administrator in the imperial service, and such Tiberius had proved himself to be. His campaigns of A.D. 5 and 6 were carried out in the country lying between the Weser and the Elbe, while the Roman fleet again navigated the North Sea, exploring the coast as far as the northern extremity of Jutland and then sailing up the Elbe to co-operate with the land forces. Then, feeling sure that the subjugation of the North was completed, Tiberius prepared to attack the Mar-

comanni in their Bohemian fastnesses. Their King, Maroboduus, had copied to some extent the Roman military model, and had gathered together a fighting force of 70,000 infantry and 4000 horsemen. With him were allied, more or less loosely, the tribes on the right bank of the Elbe, the Semnones and the Suevi, who now felt that it would be their turn next to be attacked by the restless Romans. Hitherto Maroboduus had remained neutral in the long strife between Rome and the Germans; he now, in A.D. 6, found his territory threatened with invasion on two sides. Sentius Saturninus advanced with an army from Mogontiacum (Mayence) up the valley of the Main through what is now the northern part of Bavaria, while Tiberius, quitting Germany, had concentrated an army of twelve legions at Carnuntum, on the Danube, in order to enter Bohemia from the south. But, as we have seen, it was at this moment that the whole of Pannonia and Illyricum rose in rebellion at the back of Tiberius and Maroboduus consented to make peace, instead of prosecuting the war with tenfold vigour. History has not recorded the terms upon which he agreed to sheathe the sword, but we may fairly suppose that he received specific guarantees from Tiberius that his territory would not be invaded, and that the Emperor pledged himself to respect the integrity of his dominions. Whether that pledge—if it were given—would have been kept when the hands of Augustus were again free is more than doubtful, but circumstances soon arose which compelled a revision of his whole frontier policy with respect to Germany.

While Maroboduus continued to turn a deaf ear to the representations and entreaties of the German patriots, a new star was appearing in the North. Among the princes of the Cherusci was one, named Arminius, who, upon the submission of his father, Sigimer, had frequented the Roman camps and seen service with the legions. He had been granted the Roman citizenship and the rank of an eques, and had carefully studied Roman tactics. Enjoying as he did the full confidence of the commander-in-chief in Germany, his loyalty was held to be above suspicion, in spite of the information frequently laid against him by his personal enemy Segestes. Yet it is important to point out that the rebellion which he fomented was in no sense a national rising of the whole of Germany. Even when Arminius threw off all disguise, Maroboduus never stirred, while the Batavi, Frisii, Chauci, and the other tribes of the North hardly made a sign. The revolt was strictly local in character, and its marvellous success was due rather to the appalling incapacity of a Roman general than to the genius of Arminius or to the numbers which he placed in the field. The tragic story which remains to be told irresistibly reminds the English reader, in certain of its leading features, of the tale of the Indian mutiny. Quintilius Varus, the Gallic commander-in-chief, was utterly unfitted for high command. He had owed his promotion directly to court favour and to his marriage with a niece of the Emperor, while he had grown rich on the plunder of Syria. Nor did he possess a single soldierly quality. He was a sluggard in mind as in

body, and better suited, in the scathing phrase of Velleius, for the repose of camps than for the hardships of a campaign. His political insight was as faulty as his generalship. Varus believed that the national spirit of the Germans around him had been broken. He refused to listen to the reports of his intelligence officers; he trusted Arminius as implicitly as the British colonels trusted their Sepoys. Lulled into a false sense of security, he closed his eyes to the evidences of treason which were laid before him. "*Frequentissimum initium calamitatis securitas*"—in that phrase we have the adequate explanation of the success of Arminius. Varus thought that the Germans were sufficiently tamed to endure the introduction of Roman methods and customs, and acted as though he were an urban prætor presiding over the law courts in the Forum rather than a general in the heart of an enemy's country.

Such was the man to whom the supreme command of the Rhine legions had been entrusted, and in the year 9 the crisis came. Varus was then in his summer quarters on the Weser, in the neighbourhood of the modern Minden. His communications with the Rhine were kept open by a chain of small posts along the road which ran through Aliso to Vetera, the headquarters of the northern army on the Rhine. He spent the summer in hearing lawsuits and adjusting quarrels, and then in the autumn prepared to lead his army back. In order to punish some refractory districts, he decided to take a circuitous route, which led him away from the main road, and set out with an army of about 20,000 men,

encumbered with baggage and hampered by the presence of a large number of women and children. He was not anticipating serious opposition, but was merely marching from summer to winter quarters — a circumstance which helps to explain, though it does not in the remotest degree justify, his utter unpreparedness for attack. No sooner had he reached difficult country than the people rose in insurrection all round him. Arminius himself accompanied the general and supped in his tent, and on the very evening before he quitted the Roman lines, his rival, Segestes, had denounced his intended treason to Varus, and had implored him to seize them both and hold them as hostages until his warning should be verified by fact. Varus refused to believe, and blundered on, nor was it until Arminius had absented himself and then speedily reappeared at the head of an armed host attacking the Roman column that the general recognised the trap into which he had fallen.

Even then the army need not have been lost, if there had been a capable general in command of the legions. Roman troops had often found themselves in equally ugly corners, but had shaken off their adversaries and extricated themselves from peril. Their communications were cut; they were surrounded by forests and swamps; they had to fight for every forward step they took, and they were cruelly hampered by the severity of the weather and the encumbrances of the women and the wounded. Yet, though their plight was bad, it was no worse than that from which Julius Cæsar, Marcus Antonius, and the younger Drusus had emerged in triumph.



COIN OF AUGUSTUS AND LIVIA.



COIN STRUCK BY TIBERIUS IN MEMORY OF AUGUSTUS.

But not only was Varus himself absolutely incompetent; his staff officers, apparently, were equally destitute of military science, leadership, and even courage. The cavalry were led from the field of battle by their craven commander in disgraceful flight, only to be surrounded and cut to pieces a few miles farther on. The infantry stood their ground manfully until Varus, who was wounded early in the battle, took his own life. From the fact that his friends tried to burn the body to prevent it from falling into the enemy's hands, we may infer that the army of Varus was not rushed in one great onslaught, but rather that the attack was renewed on successive days, and that the legions were overwhelmed piecemeal as the march gradually became a rout. Despairing of safety, most of the officers imitated the example of Varus, and committed suicide, until at length the sole survivor surrendered what remained of the army to Arminius. Such was the fate of Varus and his legions, and such the heavy penalty paid by arrogance and incompetence. The whole host perished miserably. Only a few stragglers managed to reach Aliso in safety, while most of those who had surrendered were barbarously put to death by their captors. Some were crucified; others were buried alive; others were offered as sacrifice on the altars of the German priests, and their heads were nailed to the trees of the forests. And it is significant that the victors reserved their most appalling tortures not for the combatants, but for the advocates and pleaders whom they found in Varus's camp. Florus preserves the legend that when one

of these luckless lawyers had his tongue cut out and his mouth sewn up, his savage executioners taunted him with the gibe: "At last, you viper, cease your hissing." The story has its historical importance as shewing how deeply the iron of the Roman law had entered into the soul of the free German barbarian.

Some historians have sought to explain the defeat of Varus and the indifferent behaviour of his troops by the supposition that these three legions were composed mainly of recruits, and that the Rhine had been denuded of its veterans to reinforce the Danubian legions in Pannonia and Illyricum. But in the face of the explicit statement of Velleius, who describes the legions of Varus as the flower of the Roman army,* this supposition is scarcely tenable. Helpless incompetence, such as that displayed by Varus and his staff, has led to the destruction of even finer armies than that which perished so miserably in one of the defiles of the mountain ranges of Munster and left its three eagles in the possession of the exultant Germans. It was fortunate, indeed, for Rome that even in the moment of depression attending this shattering defeat, there were found one or two capable men on the spot who knew how to avert the full consequences of the disaster. One of these, Lucius Cædicius, was stationed at Aliso. When the Germans, flushed with their triumph, advanced to overwhelm him, he resolutely bore the siege as long as his supplies held out, and then, quitting his encampment under cover of night, succeeded

* *Exercitus omnium fortissimus, disciplina, manu, experientiaque bellorum inter Romanos milites princeps.*

in fighting his way through to Vetera on the Rhine. Thanks to Cædicius, who thus delayed the rush of Arminius, Lucius Monius Asprenas, in command of two legions at Mogontiacum (Mayence), had time to move north to Vetera, to secure the passage of the river, and to allay the excitement among the German tribes and Gallic cantons on the left bank. Arminius did not even essay to cross the Rhine, and the worst fears which were entertained at Rome were not realised. It was fortunate again for Augustus that the King of the Marcomanni still remained faithful to his neutrality. Arminius sent him the head of Varus, as a ghastly proof of victory and as an incitement to him to join in the national movement, but Maroboduus merely forwarded the head to Augustus and kept his faith with Rome. No wonder the Romans made Fortune a goddess and worshipped at her shrine.

Rome had been preparing to celebrate with unusual magnificence the victories of Tiberius and Germanicus in Illyricum when the calamitous news arrived. At once panic and despair seized upon the capital. The festivals were abandoned, the games were forgotten, and alike in the Palace, in the Senate, and in the Forum, all trembled with fear lest the next courier should bring word that the whole of Gaul was ablaze. Tiberius, fortunately present in Rome at this critical hour, was sent to take over the command on the Rhine for the third time, with every available soldier who could be spared for the purpose. But the now aged Emperor completely broke down under the blow. In a graphic and

familiar chapter Suetonius describes how Augustus, for long months together, neglected the care of his person and allowed his hair and beard to go untrimmed; how he dashed his head in frenzy against the walls, and was constantly heard to cry out in anguish: "Quintilius Varus, give me back my legions." Whether these details be simple truth or decorated fable, we can well believe what a shock such a disaster must have been to one of Augustus's years, and to an Emperor who had been accustomed only to tidings of victory. So grave was the position that he not only posted guards throughout the city to repress any possible tumult, but sent despatches to the provincial governors bidding them be specially watchful of rebellion. When military empires lose their military prestige, insurrection is the natural result. His first care was to obtain new recruits for his army, but the people hung back and would not enlist. According to Dion Cassius, he branded with infamy and confiscated the goods of one man in every five under thirty-five years of age who refused to serve, and of one man in ten of all above that age. But even these rigorous measures were unavailing to procure the necessary recruits, and he was driven to put many to death before reinforcements could be raised and sent north to Tiberius. The Emperor banished all Gauls and Germans from the capital, and dismissed the German mercenaries serving in the Prætorian Guard, so apprehensive was he that there was treason afoot. Nor was his confidence restored until he was assured of the unwavering loyalty of Maroboduus and re-

ceived the gratifying intelligence that the victorious enemy had turned back.

Throughout the closing years of his reign no decisive actions were fought. During the year 10 Tiberius held the supreme command; in the ensuing year he shared it with Germanicus; in the year 12 he was again sole commander, while at the beginning of 13 he returned to Rome and left Germanicus behind him as commander-in-chief. Their expeditions were intended not so much to reconquer Germany as to make an imposing demonstration of military strength. And, in the meantime, Augustus had arrived at the momentous decision to abandon the Elbe frontier and fall back upon the Rhine. It is not too much to say that this was one of the most important steps which he took throughout his whole reign and one which had the most far-reaching consequences. No one can estimate how profoundly he thereby modified the course of future events, or to what extent the history of modern Europe would have been changed if he had not definitely abandoned his old policy of Romanising Germany as he had Romanised Gaul and Spain. The development of Teutonic civilisation would, in all human probability, have proceeded along wholly different lines and there would not have been that sharp antagonism between the Latin and the Teuton temperament which has been and still is one of the most dominating factors in European politics. It remains to ask why Augustus took this retrograde step and to judge whether his policy was prudent or the reverse. His motives at least were clear enough. Augustus

was an old man and his chief anxiety was that he might end his days in peace. He had acutely felt the long strain of the Pannonian and Dalmatian wars, and he regarded with even graver apprehension the prospect of equally arduous and hazardous campaigns in Germany. It was abundantly clear that the reconquest of Germany must involve sooner or later a great war with the Marcomanni, with the moral certainty that in Bohemia too there would be a long period of revolt and insurrection, as well as trouble with the tribes living beyond the Elbe. The retention of the Elbe frontier meant, in other words, a continued war policy, and a continued series of annexations, for barbarism and the Roman civilisation could not lie peacefully side by side. Such a policy, to be successful, would inevitably entail an enormous increase in the military forces of the Empire and Augustus had just seen how strong was the disinclination of the people of Italy to enter the legions even in a moment of desperate emergency. The fact that not only freedmen but slaves were drafted by hundreds into the legions raised in the recent crises spoke eloquently of the decay of the ancient martial spirit. We cannot wonder, therefore, that he hesitated and drew back, impelled thereto alike by his personal inclinations, by his increasing infirmities, by the loss of popularity which, with rare exceptions, seems to be one of the penalties of length of reign, as well as by his certain conviction that the legions were barely adequate to hold even the territory which was already securely Roman. The "far-flung battle line" of Rome was

dangerously thin; who should know the peril of its further extension better than Augustus? The tendency of the latest school of historians is to condemn the step which the Emperor took. They point out with perfect truth that a boundary formed by the Elbe and the Danube is far shorter than a boundary formed by the Rhine and the Danube. From the strategic point of view there can be no comparison between them. All the advantages lie with the Elbe over the Rhine. The essential weakness of the Rhine and Danube frontier was that the legions stationed on the two rivers could not co-operate or lend one another assistance, for a great wedge of barbarism was thrust in between them, which proved an impassable barrier. But statesmanship has to deal with the actual rather than with the ideal, and has usually to be content with the second best. Augustus drew back.

One would give much to know the contents of the despatches which passed between him and Tiberius. No doubt he left Tiberius considerable freedom of action, but the general tenor of his instructions was clearly "Back!" Probably enough, Augustus never made any explicit or public announcement of his determination. Public opinion was opposed to retirement, and there were doubtless critics in plenty who denounced Augustus in secret for his policy of "scuttle." The subsequent campaigns of Germanicus in the early years of Tiberius's reign shew how keen the legions were to be led against the conquerors of Varus, and the recall of Germanicus after a series of brilliant victories gave rise to the most

malignant rumours. The abandonment of Germany was felt to be a confession of weakness, to be a retractation of the proud boast of Rome that wherever her standards had once been planted they made the soil around them Roman. It was a foretaste of humiliation, an acknowledgment of defeat, which could not be concealed by the formation of the two so-called Germanic provinces on the Rhine, carved not out of the territory of the German but of the Gaul. Yet Augustus was right to draw back, if he considered his military strength inadequate to the task of holding down all Germany. At the moment it certainly was inadequate, and the miserable exhibition of craven cowardice which had just been made by the Roman people fully justified him in the step which he took. But was he equally justified in solemnly warning his successors to be content with the boundaries as he left them? We think not. He should rather have urged upon them the imperative need of increasing and reorganising the Roman army, so that it might carry the eagles once more to the Elbe and guard that frontier as the Rhine was already guarded. He himself might be too old to re-create Roman military ardour; but he should have set this duty before those who were to come after him. As it was, the injunction which he laid upon Tiberius in his will, the injunction that the Empire should be confined to its present limits, became the keystone of Roman policy with respect to Germany, and Tiberius allowed Germanicus to wage campaign after campaign in Germany, as though his policy were reconquest, and then withdrew him

at the very moment when the prizes of victory seemed to be falling into his hands. Thus the Rhine continued to be the Roman frontier as long as the Empire lasted. New provinces were formed in later years in Britain, Dacia, and Mesopotamia, but Germany was left to the barbarian.

Augustus sought, as we have said, to conceal his complete change of policy by permitting Tiberius and Germanicus to make military demonstrations on the right bank of the Rhine. He also raised the number of the Rhenish legions from five to eight, and settled the formation of the two provinces of Upper and Lower Germany. The former, with its headquarters at Mogontiacum (Mayence), stretched from above Coblenz to below Argentoratum (Strassburg) and included not only the right bank of the Rhine but also the valleys of the Main and the Neckar. Lower Germany stretched from below Bonn to the North Sea, keeping to the left bank of the Rhine until Noviomagus (Nimeguen) was reached and then striking across to the Zuyder Zee, and including the whole of the Netherlands. Vetera, where the river Lippe flows into the Rhine, was the capital of this province, and a chain of fifty forts secured the principal points of passage along the river bank up to its source. On the left bank dwelt the tribes which had been transplanted from the right by successive generals, and these were retained by Augustus and his successors as a rampart against their kinsmen for the protection of Gaul. But the dream of a great German province faded for ever from the view of Rome.

CHAPTER XIX

THE IMPERIAL FAMILY

THE fortunes of the Imperial family during the last twenty years of Augustus's life are of absorbing interest. The death of Marcus Agrippa in B.C. 12 had again left the question of the succession open. Augustus, indeed, had formally adopted Agrippa's two eldest sons, Caius and Lucius Cæsar, but Caius was a mere child of eight, and the care of the Roman Empire could not devolve upon a boy. Agrippa had also left two daughters, Julia and Agrippina, and a third son, subsequently known as Agrippa Postumus, was born a few months later. Augustus had thus five grandchildren in the direct line, but he needed an heir who might, in case of his sudden demise, succeed at once. The death of Agrippa, therefore, enhanced the already brilliant prospects of the two sons of Livia, Tiberius and Drusus. The elder, Tiberius, had been quæstor and prætor, and had accompanied the Emperor into Gaul. He was married to Vipsania, the daughter of Agrippa by his first wife, Pomponia, and to her he was devotedly attached. Augustus now commanded

him to divorce her and marry the widowed Julia, who was thus for the third time forced into a matrimonial alliance for reasons of state. Tiberius unwillingly complied — "with great anguish of mind," says Suetonius, because he loved Vipsania, and disapproved of the character of Julia; and for the next few years he and his brother Drusus stood next the throne. They had already displayed their military capacity by adding Rhætia, Vindelicia, and Noricum to the Empire, and Drusus in Germany and Tiberius in Pannonia continued to win new laurels for themselves and for Augustus. Drusus was perhaps the more popular of the two, for even in his early manhood there was noted in Tiberius that quality of moroseness which grew upon him in later life. Yet in capacity they were both adequate to any command which might be entrusted to them, and the loss of Marcus Agrippa, the most capable man of his time, was scarcely felt, thanks to the genius displayed by the two Crown Princes. But in B. C. 9 Drusus succumbed to the effects of a fall from his horse in Germany at the age of thirty, leaving behind him, as a child of but twelve months, the young Germanicus. His brother Tiberius hurried up to Germany to take over the vacant command, enjoyed in B. C. 7 the honour of a triumph, and in the following year received the Tribunicia Potestas for five years.

This, as we have seen in the case of Agrippa, was the highest distinction which Augustus could bestow, yet no sooner was it granted than Tiberius withdrew from public life. He had, indeed, good

reason to be dissatisfied with a position which must have been intensely galling to one who inherited a full measure of the Claudian pride. He detested the wife who had been thrust upon him. Suetonius narrates how, some time after his marriage with Julia, he happened to encounter Vipsania and gazed after her with tears in his eyes, and how Augustus took precautions that they might never meet again. Naturally, therefore, Tiberius's relations with Julia were none of the happiest, and, after she had borne him a child who died in infancy, they ceased to live together. From this time forward Julia cast discretion to the winds, and the irregularities of her conduct were the common talk and scandal of Rome. They were known to everyone except her father, to whom she was still the apple of his eye. Augustus was intensely proud of her beauty and of her winning, fascinating ways. He had bestowed unusual pains over her education; and Julia possessed, in addition to remarkable natural wit, all the accomplishments of the day. She had been brought up on the stern ancient model, under the care of the Empress Livia, and it was well known in Rome how the consort and the daughter of Augustus wove in their own apartments the woollen garments worn by the Emperor. Augustus had hoped that Julia would develop into a Roman matron distinguished for her gravity and reserve, and emulating in domestic virtues the patterns of Roman perfection. Save for dynastic reasons, nothing would have pleased him better than for Julia to have become a Vestal Virgin, dedicating her life to the religious



CAMEO OF JULIA AS DIANA.
FROM THE BRITISH MUSEUM.

service of the State. But this accomplished and high-spirited girl chafed at the restrictions imposed upon her. Many anecdotes are recorded which shew how entirely her views were opposed to those of her father. "My father forgets that he is Cæsar," she replied to one who reminded her that Augustus's ideal was simplicity; "I cannot but remember that I am Cæsar's daughter." On another occasion, when she presented herself in the Emperor's presence in a rich and elaborate costume, he said nothing, but the look on his face shewed his displeasure. The following day she appeared in a sober and simple dress, and he at once exclaimed that now she was attired as befitted Cæsar's daughter. "To-day," was her answer, "I am dressed to please my father; yesterday I dressed to please my husband." At another time he sternly rebuked a young Roman noble, named Lucius Vicinius, for calling upon his daughter at Baiæ, and chided Julia for appearing in the theatre in the company of some of the young fashionables of Roman society. "They will grow old with me," was her pert reply. But though her conduct vexed him sometimes and led him to exclaim that he had two troublesome daughters, "Julia and the Republic," he still had a profound belief in her purity and innocence, and was heard to boast that she was a second Claudia, the equal in virtue of the famous Roman matron whose chastity had availed to draw off the vessel conveying the image of Cybele from the shallows of the Tiber upon which it had grounded. Augustus was cruelly deceived. Julia was indeed a second Claudia, but her prototype was

not Claudia the virtuous but the Clodia of Catullus, the notorious Medea of the Palatine, whose amours and excesses were still vividly remembered.

It is impossible not to feel some sympathy with a high-spirited girl who had been brought up in such uncongenial surroundings, in the society of a step-mother who saw in her the chief obstacle to her ambitious hopes for her own son, and of a father who did not carry into practice the stern morality which he inculcated into his women folk. Augustus's love for Julia was sincere and profound, but he had not hesitated to marry her not once but thrice for reasons of state. Her union with the young and handsome Marcellus may not have been uncongenial, but Marcus Agrippa was of the same age as her father, and too deeply immersed in his public duties to care much for pleasure. There was no open scandal before Agrippa's death, but when, on his demise, she found herself thrust upon the reluctant Tiberius, there is little wonder that she turned to the gay world for amusement and frivolity. The position was an almost intolerable one both for husband and wife, and Julia flung herself headlong into "the whirlpool's shrieking face." She counted her lovers by the score. Their names have come down to us and we find among them a Gracchus, a Scipio, an Appius Claudius, even an Antonius. Tiberius dared not lay the truth before Augustus; he did not venture to disclose to the father the adulteries of the daughter, and thus the associate of Augustus in the Tribunician Power and the second man in the Empire had to suffer in silence the stain which his wife

inflicted upon his honour. Here, no doubt, we may find at least one of the motives which determined Tiberius to retire from Rome.

Yet this was not his only reason. The two eldest sons of his wife, Caius and Lucius Cæsar, were growing up to manhood and Augustus lavished upon them the affection of a grandfather. They were always in his company. At his meals he liked to have them lying at the foot of his couch; whenever he drove out he took them with him in his carriage or had them riding on horseback by his side. He taught them himself and took pains that they should model their handwriting upon his own. He bestowed upon them the title of "Princes of the Youth" and looked eagerly forward to introducing them into public life. This eagerness was so manifest that the Senate passed special decrees to enable them to hold office at an exceptionally early age, and Caius, while still in his teens, was already admitted to the priesthood and the senatorial benches at public banquets and the shows. Tiberius, the general and administrator, the capable man of action and statesman, might possess the esteem and the respect of Augustus; but the Emperor's affections were centred in the two young Princes, and Tiberius probably saw that, in the course of the next few years, he would be shelved to make way for the youthful favourites. He knew that he had been forced to marry their mother that he might act as guardian of her sons, and Julia not only disdained him as unequal in rank to herself — though a Claudius acknowledged no superior in point of rank and birth

—but made his dishonour and her own the by-word of the capital. Tiberius, therefore, in B.C. 6, declined the commission given him by Augustus to settle the affairs of Armenia and announced his intention of retiring to Rhodes. He urged as his excuse that his ambition had been satisfied and that his one desire was for rest and retirement. Livia implored him not to go; Augustus bitterly complained in the Senate that he was being deserted by his family. Tiberius was obdurate and abstained from food for four days until the requisite permission was granted. Then he hurriedly quitted Rome and betook himself to Rhodes, where he remained in exile for eight years, living in a modest house as a private citizen and on terms of equality with his Greek acquaintances.

The withdrawal of Tiberius left the field open to the two young Princes. In B.C. 5 Augustus accepted the consulship in order to introduce Caius Cæsar to public life and accepted it again in B.C. 2 for the introduction of Lucius. But in the latter year the storm which had been gathering over the head of Julia broke in full fury. Augustus at last heard the truth which had probably been known for years to everyone but himself. Grown reckless from long impunity, Julia had openly flaunted her folly in the Forum, and paraded her vices in the public streets. The daughter of the Emperor, now in her thirty-eighth year, was not content with being the leader of the gay and dissolute fashionable society, of which Ovid was the mouthpiece and instructor in vice, but she had fallen, if her accusers may be

believed, to the level of the common women of the town. Augustus, in his fierce anger, spared neither himself nor the guilty ones. He made no effort at concealment. He called the Senate and the whole world to witness how a Roman father could punish the crimes of a dearly loved child. Julia was banished to the barren island of Pandateria, where no one was allowed to approach her without permission. He forbade her the use of wine and all the delicacies and comforts of life. Most of her paramours suffered a like sentence of banishment; one alone was put to death. This was Julius Antonius, a son of the Triumvir, who had been spared and brought up by Augustus in the Palace and had been mad enough to intrigue with the daughter of the man who had slain his father. Augustus felt the disgrace deeply. When he was told that one of Julia's freedwomen named Phœbe, who had been privy to her mistress's amours, had hanged herself, the bitter cry escaped him, "I would that I had been Phœbe's father rather than Julia's." It was not only the honour of the Imperial House which suffered but the credit of the Imperial policy. He had been struggling for years against the corruption of the age; the disgrace of his own daughter now advertised the impotence of his efforts. Horace had congratulated the Emperor on his success in restoring domestic purity,

> Nullis polluitur casta domus stupris,
> Mos et lex maculosum edomuit nefas;

here was the damning commentary. Augustus had

to admit defeat, and his daughter had struck the blow. It is this which explains the severity with which he treated the guilty Julia. He was not a moral man himself; but he had preached morality to others. Had he acted up to his own professions, he might have taught better and learnt how to forgive. Rome sympathised with the daughter, not with the father. The people constantly petitioned him to relent and revoke the decree of banishment, but he was obdurate and, solemnly and in public, cursed all such wives and daughters. The only concession he made was to allow Julia a change of prison from an island to the mainland, and to grant her an increase of personal comforts. But to the day of his death he never saw her again, and whenever her name or that of her daughter, Julia, who followed in her mother's footsteps, was mentioned, he would quote the line from Homer: "Ah! would that I had never entered wedlock and had died a childless man!"

The disgrace of Julia made no immediate change in the position of Tiberius. Augustus, indeed, had upon his own authority sent her, in the name of his step-son, a formal notice of repudiation, and the ill-starred marriage was thus dissolved. Tiberius rejoiced at his release, but thought it politic to write frequent letters to Augustus, begging him to deal leniently with the culprit. And he now began to be anxious about his own situation, and to regret the hasty step which he had taken in retiring to Rhodes. But he found Augustus in no yielding mood. He was curtly informed, when he wrote asking to be allowed to return to Rome to see his family, that as

he had been so eager to abandon them he might dismiss from his mind all anxiety on their account. The Emperor had been deeply angered at Tiberius's desertion of him, and the utmost concession which Livia could obtain from her husband was his consent to announce that Tiberius was acting as his legate in Rhodes. This, however, can scarcely have concealed from the prying eyes of Roman society the fact that Tiberius was in deep disgrace, and the world now looked to Caius and Lucius as the Emperor's heirs.

The elder of the two was sent at the head of an important mission to the East, under the tutelage of Lollius, and the public were given to understand that vast campaigns were in preparation, which should rival the conquests of Alexander. Caius was then twenty years of age, and, when he reached Samos, Tiberius crossed over from Rhodes and paid a visit to his young kinsman. We do not know what took place at the interview, but it is evident that Tiberius endeavoured to persuade Augustus that he had withdrawn to Rhodes in order that he might not stand in the way of Caius's advancement, and that he sought vainly to conciliate the favour of the youth who seemed certain of the succession. A story was current that Augustus had promised Caius that he would not allow Tiberius to return to Rome except with his consent, and Lollius, who was Caius's guardian and tutor, was a bitter enemy of Tiberius. Tiberius, therefore, not only failed to win Caius's good-will, but his prestige fell so low that one of Caius's associates, heated with wine at his table, jumped up and swore that he would go to Rhodes

and bring back "the exile's head," if only Caius gave the word. Clearly throughout this period Tiberius was regarded in the East as a man whose death would not be unwelcome in the highest quarters, and for two years he went in fear of his life. But suddenly there came a change in his fortunes, which was attributed to the ceaseless intercession of his mother Livia on his behalf, and to the disgrace of Lollius. The latter was discovered to have been in treasonable communication with the Parthians, and the young Caius had grown tired of the ascendency which his guardian and adviser had exercised over him. His hatred of Lollius led him to become reconciled with Tiberius, and Caius seems to have urged the Emperor to permit his step-father's return to Rome. Consequently, in 2 A. D., the exile of Rhodes was granted permission to return to the capital, on condition that he remained a private citizen and took no part in public life.

Tiberius was now in his forty-fifth, and Augustus in his sixty-fifth year, and the prospects of the former succeeding to the Empire seemed remote indeed, inasmuch as Caius and Lucius Cæsar were grown to manhood. Yet within eighteen months of Tiberius's return both were dead. Lucius Cæsar, the consul-elect, who had been sent on a mission to Spain, was seized with illness at Massilia, and died there. In the following year Caius was treacherously wounded in Armenia. The wound was not in itself a fatal one, but the young Prince, whose constitution was not of the strongest, made slow recovery, and ruined his chance of restoration to health by omitting the

proper medical precautions and indulging in excess. He withdrew to Syria, and was on his way home when he succumbed in the city of Limyra. This double bereavement weighed heavily upon the now aging Emperor. There is a charming letter addressed by him to Caius on the occasion of his own sixty-sixth birthday, in which he assures him how keenly he feels his absence. "*Oculi mei requirunt meum Caium.*" "My eyes sadly miss the presence of my dear Caius, especially on fête-days, like to-day, but, wherever you are, I hope that you are well and happy and have celebrated my birthday." Augustus had made no secret of his intentions towards Caius, who was to have been his heir and successor. Now both he and his brother were dead, and public gossip in Rome did not hesitate to hint at poison, and connect Livia and Tiberius with deaths so sudden and so opportune to their interests. There was, of course, not a jot of evidence to warrant the suspicion, and it may be dismissed without comment. The poisoner had not yet come to court.

Thus, by a series of extraordinary fatalities, in which a superstitious world saw the manifest hand of Destiny, the Imperial family had been sadly thinned in numbers. It was certainly remarkable that the valetudinarian Emperor should have survived so many of the younger scions of his House. Marcellus, Drusus, Caius, and Lucius Cæsar, all four had been cut off in early manhood, while Agrippa had died in the full vigour of middle age. The dearest hopes of the Emperor had been blasted by these unlooked-for calamities, and the disgrace of

Julia still embittered his life. He had, indeed, still descendants in the direct line. Agrippa Postumus was now a boy of fifteen. Julia, his eldest granddaughter, was married to Lucius Æmilius Paulus, and her sister Agrippina to Germanicus, the son of Drusus. But though these unions gave promise of a new generation, Augustus was well advanced in years and needed a prop upon which he might lean. It was natural, therefore, that he should turn again to Tiberius and restore him to favour. No sooner did the Emperor receive the melancholy intelligence of the death of Caius, than he adopted his step-son Tiberius and bestowed upon him the Tribunicia Potestas for a second time, together with the command of the Rhine legions for the prosecution of the war in Germany. But, faithful as ever in his devotion towards his lineal descendants, he adopted at the same time his sole surviving grandson, Agrippa Postumus, and insisted that Tiberius should adopt his nephew Germanicus, the son of his dead brother Drusus, and the husband of Agrippina. By so doing the Emperor hoped to unite the Imperial family and remove all causes of jealousy. The remainder of his reign was passed in almost unbroken warfare. During the next five years, from A. D. 4 to A.D. 9, Tiberius scarcely set foot in the capital. He was continuously with the legions, first in Germany, then in Pannonia, and afterwards back again on the Rhine, and only saw Augustus as he visited Rome to pass from one command to the other and receive his chief's instructions. The years were dark and gloomy, for the Pax Romana had been broken and



THE FAMILY OF AUGUSTUS.

RELIEF IN SAN VITALE AT RAVENNA.

Rome was fighting on the Rhine and the Danube not so much for glory as for existence. It was fortunate for Augustus that in this time of trial he had so experienced and capable a general as Tiberius on whom to rely, and that the genius of the Claudian House manifested itself once more in the young Germanicus, the worthy son of a worthy father.

But the domestic troubles of Augustus had not yet come to an end. In A.D. 7, three years after his adoption, Postumus was banished to the island of Planasia and kept under strict military guard. His offence is unknown, and his unhappy fate forms one of the dark mysteries of the House of Cæsar. All the authorities agree that in character he was intractable and wild. Suetonius described him as brutish and fierce, "*sordidum ac ferox ingenium.*" Velleius speaks of his extraordinary depravity of mind and his recklessness, "*Mira pravitate animi atque ingenii in præcipitia conversus.*" Tacitus, whose detestation of Tiberius would naturally bias him in favour of one of Tiberius's victims, declares that he was utterly devoid of worthy qualities and possessed only the brute courage of physical strength, "*Rudem sane bonarum artium et robore corporis stolide ferocem.*" We may suppose, therefore, that the young Prince, whose personal appearance was ungainly and repellent, was a savage in manners, moody and vicious, and a stolid rebel against authority. His tastes were low; his mind depraved and gross, and he lacked the dignity which was part of the Roman noble's birthright. Probably in his childhood he

had been neglected and allowed to run wild. His chances of the succession seemed hardly worth consideration, and it is to be remembered that he was brought up in the household of Julia at a time when his mother was scandalising the capital. The account which Dion Cassius gives of how this luckless Prince idled away his time at Baiæ, fishing-rod in hand, and claimed the attributes of Neptune and the command of the sea on the strength of the good fortune which attended his angling, suggests a dull wit and sluggish intellect, and it may well be that Agrippa Postumus inherited that taint of madness which was to shew itself in diverse yet unmistakable forms in the younger descendants of the Cæsars. Augustus, apparently, attributed these defects of mind and character to wilful perversity rather than to natural shortcomings. He soon grew impatient with his adopted son and impatience changed to detestation. Postumus had no friends at court, but he had many bitter enemies, and none more persevering and irreconcilable than the astute Livia, whose ascendancy over her husband grew stronger with his increasing infirmities, and whose ambitions were centred in one object alone, the advancement of her son Tiberius. Postumus returned her hate in equal measure; accused her to his associates of all manner of crimes, and, in his passion, did not spare the Emperor himself. The only living grandson of Augustus, he was jealous that his step-father Tiberius should rob him of the whole or part of his inheritance, and the mad boy vowed vengeance. His unguarded language was

carried to the Emperor's ears, and Augustus determined to cast him off. He denounced Postumus in the Senate, where he complained bitterly of the lad's character and vices, and the Senators formally sanctioned the sentence of exile which had been passed upon him.

Agrippa Postumus, therefore, was deported to the island of Planasia and kept under strict watch. He found some sympathisers, for mention is made by Seutonius of an obscure conspiracy formed with the avowed object of rescuing him and his mother from their captivity. But the plotters were men of no account, a convicted embezzler named Lucius Audasius, and a Parthian half-breed, Asinius Epicadus. Such a crazy scheme had no chance of success and scarcely merits the name of conspiracy. Much more interesting is the story mentioned by Tacitus that Augustus, shortly before his death, repented of the harshness with which he had treated his grandson and paid him a secret visit in his prison. It was reported that he was accompanied only by Fabius Maximus and a few trusted servants, and that many tears were shed on both sides at the interview. It was said, too, that Maximus revealed the visit to his wife Marcia, who communicated it to the Empress Livia, and that soon afterwards Maximus committed suicide and Marcia blamed herself as the cause of his death. Probably the story was the merest gossip, but it is quite conceivable that the aged Emperor, softening under the shadow of approaching death, repented him of the harshness with which he had treated a dull-witted lad, who probably had been

more sinned against than sinning. The eager haste with which Livia and Tiberius hurried Agrippa Postumus out of the world, as soon as Augustus had breathed his last, shews their anxiety to rid themselves of one who had been their victim and might even now become a dangerous rival.

Agrippa Postumus had been banished in A.D. 7. Two years later his sister Julia suffered the same fate. She had been married to Lucius Æmilius Paulus, one of the leading members of the Roman aristocracy, and bore him a son and a daughter. But, undeterred by the punishment which had overtaken her mother, she had followed the elder Julia's evil example, and the irregularities of her conduct were as notorious as those of her parent. Her lovers were many, but chief among them was Decimus Silanus, and the guilty pair were charged not only with adultery but with treason. We do not know what form the treason took, but in some way or other the crime of Julia and Silanus appears to be closely connected with the banishment of Ovid, which took place at the same time. The nominal reason assigned for the sentence passed upon the poet was that the verses which he had written on "The Art of Love" were an offence against public morality. Such a judgment would be endorsed by any censor of public morals, but this notorious poem had been published some years before — in the year, indeed, which had witnessed the banishment of the elder Julia—and the elegiacs of repentance, which Ovid penned in his exile, clearly indicate that this was not his principal offence. Many theories have

been started in explanation of the obscure lines in which he refers to the reason which brought down upon him the wrath of the Emperor, but the most plausible seems to be that which attributes to him a guilty knowledge of the intrigue between Julia the younger and Silanus, with both of whom he was probably on terms of intimate friendship. Ovid was the poet laureate, not of the court — for Augustus spurned all his overtures—but of the fashionable and depraved society of Rome, which, in the scathing words of Tacitus, existed only to corrupt and to be corrupted: "*Corrumpere et corrumpi sæculum vocant.*" And thus when Augustus discovered that Ovid had been privy to an intrigue which brought new scandal and disgrace upon the Imperial House he banished to the farthest corner of the Euxine the poet to whose libidinous verses he attributed much of the existing depravity. Julia was exiled from Rome; the fate of Silanus is not known. Thus of the five children of Julia and Marcus Agrippa, the two eldest sons were dead, the youngest son and the elder daughter were in deep disgrace, and only the second daughter, Agrippina,—the wife of Germanicus, who was winning golden opinions as a general,—was any comfort to the Emperor in his declining years.

Augustus had now passed his seventieth year, and one cannot but pity the central figure in the desolate mansion on the Palatine, who had suffered so many bitter disappointments in the intimacy of his domestic life. His hopes rested upon Tiberius and Germanicus. The one was a man of middle age;

the younger was the popular idol of Rome. If Augustus had been spared to greater length of years, it is conceivable that Tiberius might have been supplanted by the son of his dead brother Drusus, whom he had been obliged to adopt as his own son. For it is tolerably clear that there never was any real warmth of feeling between Augustus and Tiberius. Tiberius possessed many sterling and indeed inestimable qualities, but from his earliest days he seems to have been reserved and morose, and Augustus liked to be surrounded by young people who were frank and joyous. Full allowance must be made for the extraordinary embarrassments of Tiberius's position. The step-son saw himself successively passed over in favour of the nephew, the minister, and then of the young grandsons. Only when the hand of death had removed the two first husbands of the Emperor's daughter was he thought worthy of becoming the son-in-law of Augustus, and then he was forced to separate from a wife he loved to take to his house a woman whose character was a byword in the city. If, as seems probable, the Empress Livia, his mother, had brought him up from his earliest years to hope for the succession, Tiberius might well be embittered that so many new obstacles from time to time arose in his path, and that his great services to the Empire seemed doomed to undergo periods of eclipse. His character is one of the standing puzzles of history, alike in his earlier and later years. But the account of Suetonius seems to be most consonant with the facts as we know them. The prevailing tradition in Rome was that

Augustus was repelled by the moroseness of his step-son, and by the gloomy hauteur and reserve which were typical of the Claudian House. It was said that when Tiberius entered a room all lively conversation was at once checked; his frowning brows made others feel ill at ease. On one occasion, when Tiberius quitted the Emperor's chamber, the doorkeepers declared that they heard Augustus exclaim, "I pity the Roman people when they come between those slow-moving jaws" (*Miserum populum Romanum qui sub tam lentis maxillis erit*). And yet Suetonius pertinently remarks, "I cannot bring myself to believe that in a matter of such momentous importance as the settlement of the succession, such a master of circumspection and prudence as Augustus would have acted rashly," and he states his conviction that the Emperor carefully weighed the virtues and vices of his step-son in the balance and found that the good qualities weighed down the bad. Augustus was right. He adopted Tiberius as his son, not because he was attached to him or in order to please Livia, but for reasons of state, because Tiberius, after the death of Marcus Agrippa, was the strongest man in the Empire, and its most experienced and capable general. Augustus was cautious, so was Tiberius. He was not likely to embark upon any mad or dangerous enterprise. He had gained sufficient military glory; he had won laurels enough; he would not emperil the Empire to win more. Augustus could not fail to respect the man who had stamped out the Pannonian insurrection and made the Rhine bank secure after the

disaster to Varus. He might not possess the brilliant qualities or the dash of his brother Drusus, which Drusus had transmitted to his son Germanicus, but he was safe, and Augustus, after the death of his favourite nephew and grandsons, wanted a safe man to succeed him.



CHAPTER XX

THE MAN AND THE STATESMAN

LET us pass to the closing scene. Early in the year 14 A. D., Augustus felt that his end was drawing nigh, and ordered that a census of the Roman people should be taken, but hearing of an omen which seemed to portend that he would not live a hundred days, he handed over its supervision to Tiberius. When this was completed, Tiberius prepared to leave Rome in order to resume his military command in Illyricum. It was then midsummer, and Augustus determined to journey with him by easy stages towards the Apulian coast. At Astura, the aged Emperor caught a chill and suffered from a sharp attack of dysentery. But he rallied, and the two Cæsars, after visiting Capreæ and Naples, reached Beneventum. There they separated, Tiberius for Brundisium, the port of departure for Illyricum; Augustus for Nola, in Campania, where a dangerous relapse set in. Messengers were hastily despatched by Livia to recall Tiberius. Whether he arrived in time to receive Augustus's last instructions is uncertain, but Livia took care

that her husband's death—which the malice of her enemies accused her of hastening—should not be made known to the world until Tiberius was at hand to assume the reins of power.

The scene which took place in the dying Emperor's bedchamber—the very room in which his father had breathed his last more than seventy years before—is one of the best known in Roman history. On the morning of his death, August 19th, Augustus enquired from those who stood around him whether there was any popular excitement at the gravity of his illness. Then he called for a mirror, and bade them arrange his hair and beard, and, with a flash of his old irony, asked whether they thought he had played his part well in the farce of life. "If so," he added, quoting from a Greek comedy, "applaud my exit and clap your hands with joy." Lying back upon the pillows, he asked after the health of a sick grandchild of Tiberius, but his last words were to his consort, Livia: "Livia, live in remembrance of our union, and fare thee well!" Euthanasia—the peaceful, painless end for which he had always prayed—was vouchsafed to him, and he passed quietly away without a struggle. What was in the mind of the dying man, no one can say. He may have been merely "sporting, in gentle irony, with the vanities of a human career"—the words are Merivale's—when he spoke of "the farce of life," but it is hard to believe that there was not a covert reference to the long intrigues and the furious jealousies which had raged among the members of the Imperial family, when he adjured Livia to remember



LIVIA AS PRIESTESS OF AUGUSTUS.
FROM POMPEII, IN THE MUSEUM AT NAPLES.

that she had been his consort. The simile of the actor leaving the stage was, in his case, marvellously apposite, but the long drama of his life had been tragedy rather than farce.

They bore the body to Rome in slow and stately procession, moving only by night, to avoid the fierce heat of the August sun. By day it reposed in the local sanctuaries of the villages and cities through which their mournful route lay. At Bovillæ, near the foot of the Alban Hills, the whole Equestrian Order was waiting to carry the dead chief over the final stage of the journey, and escort him for the last time to his house on the Palatine. The Senate sate in long debate to discuss the arrangements for a state funeral, and the most preposterous suggestions were put forward. But these were finally set on one side, and it was decided that Augustus should be buried with the stately simplicity which transcends magnificence and pomp. The body was deposited in the Forum, close by the Temple of Mars. Tiberius delivered a panegyric from the principal rostrum; Drusus from another. Then the bier was raised, and the procession of senators, knights, soldiers, and people passed through the Porta Triumphalis to the sacred place without the city where the funeral pyre had been built. The representatives of the legions marched past with the customary funeral evolutions, the torches were applied with averted faces, the flames shot up and consumed the body. From the ashes, extinguished with wine and perfumes, an eagle was seen to soar up to heaven, bearing the soul of the departed. Livia kept solemn

watch for five days and nights, and then the ashes were carefully collected, placed in an urn, and laid in the splendid Imperial Mausoleum which Augustus had built in the Campus Martius, and which already contained the ashes of Marcellus and Agrippa, of his sister Octavia, and of the young Princes Caius and Lucius. Nerva was the last of the Roman Emperors to mingle his dust with that of Augustus. In 410 the Goths ransacked the vaults and scattered the funeral urns; in 1167, the Mausoleum, which had served the Colonnas for a fortress, was razed to the ground.

On bronze pillars, standing at each side of the entrance to the Mausoleum, was inscribed the will of Augustus, executed by Livia, Tiberius, Germanicus, and Drusus, his principal heirs. These vanished centuries ago, but copies of the Imperial testament were also set up on the walls of certain temples raised to the memory of Augustus in the provinces, and a curious chance has preserved this celebrated document in marble in the little town of Ancyra, in Galatia. The *Monumentum Ancyranum*—as it is now called—is Augustus's own record of his life and career, and it owes its survival in this remote corner of the world to the fact that the Temple of Augustus became successively a Christian church and a Turkish mosque. We have had frequent occasion to refer to its more important clauses in the course of this narrative. Here we need only say that, read as a whole, it is a disappointing document, frigid, false, almost commonplace. In it Augustus laboriously counts his honours, his benefactions, his doles, his public

shows. He narrates the wars he waged, the alliances he concluded, the nations he conquered. In it, too, he traces his rise to supreme power and claims that he has "restored the Republic." We would not seem to underestimate the value of the *Monumentum Ancyranum*, or conceal the impression which it leaves upon the mind as the work of a second-rate man. It is, indeed, almost incredible that the hand which wrote it should have built up the fabric of the Roman Empire. But only in rare cases do men give free play to their imagination when they draw up their wills, and, in fairness to Augustus, we should remember that in this, his last "Speech from the Throne," he was addressing a world which scarcely understood his work, and had hardly grasped the profound change which had passed over the central organisation at Rome. Augus had never "spoken out" in life; he did not speak out in death. We must not judge the greatness of Augustus by the paltry words and thoughts of the *Monumentum Ancyranum*. We must look elsewhere to discover both the man and the statesman.

There are few more interesting pages in Latin literature than those in which Suetonius gives us a personal sketch of Augustus, in the intimate style of the modern paragraphist. It is the only detailed character sketch of the Emperor which has survived —Plutarch's *Life* being unfortunately lost—and, in spite of the discredit into which Suetonius has fallen with many modern critics, if we wish to see the real Augustus, the man of flesh and blood, we

must still turn to his fascinating note-book. Augustus had a handsome presence, says Suetonius, and retained his good looks throughout his life. In stature, he was rather under middle height, but his limbs were so well proportioned that he seemed taller. His complexion was neither swarthy nor fair; his hair was slightly curly and blonde; his eyebrows met; his nose was high at the crown and drooping at the tip; his teeth were set wide apart and in his later years much decayed. His expression was usually serene and tranquil, but his contemporaries chiefly remarked the piercing brilliancy of his eyes. He liked people to think that their brightness was due to some supernatural vigour, and was pleased and flattered when those upon whom he looked intently cast down their eyes as though unable to sustain the dazzling light which shone from his.

Augustus was never physically strong. His left hip and leg were weak and made him walk rather lame, and the index finger of his right hand was subject to cramp which necessitated his wearing a horn ring for its support when he wrote. He had many long and dangerous illnesses; and was constantly troubled with stone and a disordered liver. Every spring he used to complain of a swelling in the region of his heart, while, when the south winds were prevalent, he was never free from catarrh. The extremes both of heat and cold tried him severely. During the winter, he wore, in addition to his thick toga, four tunics, a shirt, a woollen chest protector, and stockings; and in summer he slept with his win-

dows wide open, or in the peristyle of his house with a fountain playing near him and some one to fan him. He was a confirmed valetudinarian, and preferred being rubbed with oil to washing in cold water, and frequently used sea water or warm sulphur water as a tonic. After the civil wars he entirely gave up horsemanship and military exercises and took to playing games at ball, but soon afterwards he restricted himself to drives and walks, finishing up with a short burst of running or leaping, with a carriage rug or blanket thrown over him. In later life he travelled in a litter, usually at night, and at such a snail's pace that he would occupy two days in making the journey to Tibur or Præneste, distances of only eighteen and twenty-one miles from Rome.

The pleasures of the table had no attraction for him, and his tastes, both in eating and drinking, were of the simplest. He ate when he was hungry, without regard for stated hours, and then his favourite food consisted of coarse bread, small fish, cheese made of goat's milk, and green figs. "No Jew ever keeps his sabbath fast," he once wrote to Tiberius, "as strictly as I have done to-day. I only ate two mouthfuls in the bath from the first hour of the night until my man came to anoint me." Thus, though he entertained constantly, he often sat at table without touching anything, and took food either before his guests came or after they had departed. His dinners were short, consisting, as a rule, of three courses only, and of six at the most. But they were bright and lively, for Augustus liked

the conversation to be general, and often called in reciters, actors, and even pantomimists from the circus to amuse the company. Wine he took most sparingly, rarely drinking except at dinner, and quenching his thirst between times with a little bread steeped in cold water, a slice of cucumber, a leaf of lettuce, or a juicy apple. After the midday meal he would rest a while, with a wrap thrown over his feet and shading his eyes with his hand. After dinner he used to finish his day's work, and then betake himself to bed. He allowed himself seven hours' sleep, but he usually woke three or four times during the night, and if he found any difficulty in falling off to sleep again, he used to send for some one to read to him or tell him stories.

His personal tastes were those of a simple citizen. In his younger days he had been bitten by the prevailing craze for Corinthian bronzes and rare furniture, and it was said that some of the victims of the great proscription owed their inclusion in the fatal list to their rich collections of bronzes which Augustus coveted. He changed as he grew older. Out of all the spoils of Alexandria he only reserved for himself a single Myrrhine vase, and he melted down the gold vessels which had been in use in his household. His mansion on the Palatine was one of the most modest in Rome, and for more than forty years he used the same bedchamber both in summer and winter. He had a small detached building erected in the grounds to which he retired when he wished to be undisturbed, and, if he felt unwell, he often went to sleep in Mæcenas's house

on the Esquiline. His country villas, at Lanuvium, Prænestе, and Tibur, were on the same unpretentious scale, and he razed to the ground a luxurious villa which had been built by his daughter Julia. His statues and pictures were nothing to boast of, and his furniture was commonplace and undistinguished; but he took a great interest in planting avenues and beautifying his grounds, and he had the antiquarian's eye for fragments of ancient art and sculpture. His beds and tables were long carefully preserved to shew the simplicity which had contented the founder of the Empire. His personal attire was equally destitute of distinction. He wore nothing which had not been woven by the members of his own family, and the only vanity he permitted himself was that the soles of his shoes were rather thicker than usual, in order to add a little to his height.

His chief amusement was playing at dice, but he played merely for pastime, caring nothing whether he won or lost. Suetonius preserves a curious fragment of a letter written by the Emperor to Tiberius, in which he says:

We spent the festival of Minerva quite pleasantly, for we kept the dice-board warm, and played all day long. Your brother did a lot of shouting as he played; but in the end he did not lose much, for, after standing to lose heavily, he gradually retrieved his position. I dropped twenty thousand nummi, but that was because I played with my usual reckless generosity. If I had insisted on being paid on the coups which I brought off, or had kept the money which I gave to those at the table with me, I should have won as much as fifty

thousand. But I like my way best, for my kind-heartedness will win me a heavenly crown of glory.

Occasionally he angled a little, and, as we have seen in another chapter, he was a devoted and regular patron of the public shows and all manner of theatrical entertainments. But Suetonius discloses a much more amiable trait in the Emperor's character when he describes how he delighted in the company of little children, and joined in the games which they played with marbles and nuts. Moorish and Syrian children, who were brought to the palace for his amusement, pleased him most. He liked their pretty faces and their prattling talk.

Like most of the cultured Romans of his day he enjoyed the study of rhetoric and the humanities. He had taken great pains in his younger years to become a good speaker, and even during the anxieties of the campaign of Mutina had never let a day pass without devoting some hours to reading, writing, and declamation. He spoke in a natural voice, which was pleasant to listen to, and did not lack for fluency. But it was characteristic of the man that he was afraid of his memory playing him false and of letting fall an incautious word, and consequently he invariably prepared his speeches beforehand and wrote them out on paper. For important interviews with single individuals and even with his wife Livia —a fact suggestive of "scenes" in the Imperial family—he followed the same plan, lest he should say a word too much or too little. He was a purist in his choice of language, detesting anything approaching

to affectation in style, and it was his special care to make his meaning as clear as possible. He used to chaff Mæcenas for his preciosity of diction and Tiberius for his archaisms, while Marcus Antonius he described as a madman who strove to make people stare instead of writing what they could understand. "Do you think," he said, "that we want the empty, senseless gush of Asiatic rhetoricians introduced into our everyday speech?" We have seen how he taught his young grandsons, Caius and Lucius, to imitate his handwriting; to their little sister, Agrippina, he wrote, "You must do your very best not to be affected when you write or speak." Like Lord Palmerston he was intolerant of a badly written despatch, and he once summarily dismissed a legate of consular rank from his post for writing "ixi" instead of "ipsi." "Such a clumsy and illiterate boor" was unfit for his service, and he sent him a successor. Suetonius expresses surprise at this story, for he notes that Augustus often spelt words phonetically and changed not only single letters, but whole syllables. But Emperors are privileged persons, and *supra grammaticam.*

Augustus aspired to authorship, and used to read his compositions to a select company of friends, following the fashion which had been newly introduced by Asinius Pollio. We need not perhaps regret the loss of his *Exhortation to the Study of Philosophy*, but the *Reply to Brutus on the Subject of Cato* and the *History of My Life*—the latter in thirteen books covering his career down to the Spanish Expedition —would have been of invaluable assistance to the

historians of this period. Poetry he essayed, but rather as an exercise than as a serious study. A poem on "Sicily," a volume of Epigrams, and an unfinished tragedy dealing with the story of Ajax comprised his entire efforts in this direction. He started the tragedy with great zest, but his pen did not run fluently. "How is Ajax getting on?" his friends asked. "Ajax has fallen upon his—sponge," was the neat reply. Doubtless Augustus was wise to cheat the critics of an easy prey. He had studied Greek learning and philosophy in his youth under Apollodorus of Pergamum. Arius of Alexandria was one of his most intimate friends, and the two sons of Arius, Dionysius and Nicanor, dwelt with him on the Palatine. Yet we are told that whenever he had occasion to write in Greek he set down in Latin what he wished to say and then handed it over to one of his Greek secretaries to be translated. Probably he was afraid of committing some solecism which might be turned into ridicule by his sharp-tongued Eastern subjects. Suetonius adds another detail which is intensely characteristic of Augustus. Whenever, in the course of his reading, he came upon a passage containing a useful sentiment or maxim which tended to edification, he had it copied out and sent it to such of his court officials and provincial governors as needed a word in season. It was ever one of the Emperor's foibles to believe that he could work moral revolutions by setting his people good copy-book headlines.

There is a dark side, however, to the character of Augustus which cannot be glossed over. Whether,

in his earlier years, he had been guilty of the gross offences attributed to him, we cannot tell. Such charges were recklessly made ; scarcely any one who rose to eminence escaped them. On this point he may fairly be given the benefit of the doubt and the benefit also of the enormous difference between the moral standards of his time and those of our own. But the indulgence which is granted to youth cannot be extended indefinitely to manhood and age, and the private life of the Emperor has justly fallen under the lash of the moralist. The moral hypocrite is always odious and contemptible, and the irregularities of Augustus were notorious and beyond denial. Scribonia, it was said, had complained that his mistresses were more powerful than herself. She was divorced. Livia was more astute. Failing as she did to bear him children, she connived at, and, according to the gossip of the day, even ministered to his passions, in order to retain her influence over him. His friends put forward the despicable excuse that Augustus intrigued with the wives of those whom he distrusted in order that he might learn their secrets, and so sought to justify his adultery by pleading the necessities of statecraft. The plea merely aggravates the offence.

There is nothing surprising in the failure of an emperor to observe his own edicts, when these edicts are directed against immorality, or in the violent anger displayed by a licentious parent at the licentiousness of his child. Such phenomena are common enough. But what is surprising in the case of Augustus is that in every other respect he was ascetic

and puritanical. There are indeed those who believe that his whole career was a lie, that his austerity of life was assumed for effect, that his call to the age to revert to ancient ideals was a sham, and that his zeal for religion was sheer hypocrisy. The theory is simple, but it solves the difficulty much too easily to carry conviction, and this assuredly is not the explanation of so Sphinx-like a personality. On the contrary, it is far more probable that Augustus belonged to that numerous class of men who see the right course and pursue it, but with frequent lapses into the wrong. It scarcely required that Augustus should be a pattern of virtue for him to realise whither Roman society was drifting or, indeed, had already drifted. He was a moral reformer, because moral reform was imperative. He was the author of the Lex Julia de Adulteriis because the times required such a law. The beam in his own eye did not destroy his vision. He was essentially religious and superstitious and these qualities have often been associated with profligacy. He was also an ascetic. Human nature is capable of endless combinations, but the conjunction of asceticism and licentiousness is so rare that, when it is met with, it is hardly recognised, and men are tempted to deny either one quality or the other. Yet such was the character of Augustus. In this one respect he was a moral hypocrite; in all others his moral zeal was sincere, though it was inspired perhaps by reasons of state and careful calculation rather than by personal enthusiasm for morality.

We have already dwelt upon his strong family

affections, as displayed in his tender regard for his sister, Octavia, and her son, Marcellus, in his love for his daughter Julia, and in his devotion to her two eldest boys. He was also a faithful friend. It was not easy to win his friendship, but, once obtained, it was sure. He not only, says Suetonius, suitably rewarded the virtues and merits of his intimates, but bore with their failures and shortcomings as long as they were not too flagrant: *Vitia quoque et delicta, dumtaxat modica, perpessus.* Salvidienus Rufus and Cornelius Gallus were the only two of his friends who fell into deep disgrace. With the rest there might be temporary estrangements, as with Mæcenas and Agrippa, but though they lost the Emperor's confidence, he did not pursue them with the vindictiveness which it is the usual fate of a disgraced minister to suffer. Augustus was no gloomy and solitary tyrant, dwelling apart from his fellow-men; he craved for friendship and its outward manifestations. When his intimates died he expected to be mentioned in their wills and carefully scrutinised the words in which they referred to him in their last testaments. The legacies themselves were quite a secondary consideration. He usually relinquished them to the next of kin, or, if the heirs were minors, he kept the money until they were of age and then handed it over with substantial increase. Such anxiety to be appreciated may be a weakness, but it is at least a human weakness. In his household he was strict but forgiving, and an easy master to serve. He employed a number of freedmen, many of whom gained his complete confidence. Occasionally

indeed, his punishments were of great severity, yet all men spoke with praise of his wonderful clemency.

"The clemency of Augustus" passed into a proverb, in spite of the great proscription. He had climbed to power over the dead bodies of those who stood in his path. Other conquerors have done the same. If he had lost, his life, too, would have been forfeited. But once secure, he spared the enemies from whom he had nothing to fear. He sought to conciliate his opponents, to disarm the discontented. He did not repress criticism or punish those who attacked him with speech or pamphlet. Once when Tiberius wrote to him advocating repressive measures, Augustus replied: "Do not, my dear Tiberius, let your youthful impetuosity run away with you in such a matter, nor allow your indignation to run riot because some one speaks injuriously of me. It is enough if we can make sure that no one can do us an injury." There spoke the statesman. In modern phrase, Augustus saw the folly of sitting on the safety-valve. Thus he tolerated opposition so long as it was not armed and could inflict no deadly wound, and when, on one occasion, the lampooners scattered copies of their scurrilous verses in the Senate house, he merely suggested that the Senate should, at some later date, discuss the advisibility of punishing the anonymous publication of libel. Many interesting stories are told of his tolerance. We hear, for example, of some one shouting in the Senate, "I don't understand you," as Augustus was speaking; of another interrupting him with the

words, "I would contradict you, if I had an opportunity"; and of the cry, "There ought to be free speech in the Senate," when he angrily quitted the Chamber after a heated and stormy scene. More amusing are the stories told of Antistius Labeo, the famous jurisconsult, one of the "characters" of Rome, who scarcely took the trouble to conceal his Republican sympathies. When the Senate voted the Emperor a senatorial guard of honour to watch outside his bedchamber, Labeo drily remarked that he was unsuitable for the dignity, for he snored and might disturb the Emperor's sleep. Again, at the revision of the Senate, Labeo voted for the inclusion of Marcus Lepidus, then in exile. "Is there no one more worthy?" asked Augustus with a frown. "Each man has a right to his own opinion," was the ready reply. When Messala Corvinus resigned the præfecture of the city, after holding it only for six days, with the remark that he knew not how to exercise a power which was inimical to liberty, Augustus took no offence. He simply conferred the office upon another who had fewer scruples.

He was affable and accessible to all. His doors were always open, and he received even the humblest with a gracious kindliness. The title of "Dominus" he forbade by special edict, and would not allow his favourite grandchildren to address him by that name even in jest. Once when a supplicant handed him a petition with a clumsy and exaggerated shew of deference, the Emperor wittily remarked that he might be offering a halfpenny to an elephant. Augustus was considerate in all things. To prevent

public inconvenience he usually entered or quitted the city by night, so that his friends might not feel obliged to escort him, after the Roman fashion, to or from the gates. Yet he himself observed with exactitude all the punctilio of Roman etiquette, and never missed honouring his friends with his presence at their houses when they were keeping festivals of birth or marriage. Only in his later years, after being mobbed at a marriage function, did he perform by proxy the offices of friendship. His Palace was scarcely a palace in the modern sense of the term. The paraphernalia of a court, and the host of court officials, with purely ceremonial duties, were introduced after his death, or were to be found in the adjoining house of Livia. Augustus's Palace was rather the central bureau of the Empire, where the Emperor worked and where he also happened to live.

It is perhaps an easier task to estimate Augustus as a statesman than as a man, for there is one supreme test question which we can put to all great rulers. It is this: "What have they done for their country?" If we strike the balance between the good and the evil which they wrought — and no important political changes can be effected without destroying much that is worth preservation — does the good outweigh the evil? Let us apply this test to Augustus and his work.

He destroyed the Republic; he founded the Roman Empire. There are those who regard this as an inexpiable crime. They are tempted to forget the vices of the Republic, because they were associated with free institutions, and the virtues of the

Empire, because they were associated with absolutism. But those who take this view ought to be able to shew that the Republic was capable of being reformed and re-organised from within; that the Senate and the Comitia were capable of dealing with the new world problems which were demanding solution, and that there was at least a reasonable chance of a working arrangement being arrived at between them, whereby the affairs of the State might be efficiently administered. But this is precisely what cannot be shewn. We look in vain for any indication in the last fifty years of the Republic that either the old oligarchical families or the popular party would have risen to a broad conception of what the Roman world required. The Optimates formed a narrow clique, jealous only of their class privileges; the supremacy of the Populares meant mob-rule, pure and simple. Such a system could not be made efficient by peaceful constitutional reform; it needed to be transformed by violent methods. Julius had recognised this; Augustus recognised it also. But he sought to conceal the transformation as much as possible, by retaining the ancient forms. He spoke of the Principate as though it were merely another magistracy in the Republic. He established a dyarchy, dividing the government of the world between himself and the Senate, but every year that passed made this dyarchy more and more a sham. The Principate at the death of Augustus was an Empire in everything but in name.

Let it be granted then that what Augustus established was—if we look merely at names and their

strict meaning—a sham and a fraud. But a constitution may be a sham and yet, in Carlyle's phrase, it may "march." Some of the most perfectly logical paper constitutions have proved the most appalling failures; some of the least logical have succeeded best and lasted longest. The divergence between theory and practice, on which we have laid stress in previous chapters and to which the hostile critics of Augustus point as though it were a conclusive and unanswerable condemnation of his system, is a familiar feature of the British, and indeed of every unwritten, constitution. Yet the smooth working of the British constitution, in spite of its being a tangled mass of contradictions, is the envy of many states whose constitutions are masterpieces of logical ingenuity. So, though the dyarchy of Augustus was an imposture—for the division of power between the Senate and the Principate was an unequal division—it yet served its purpose. It smoothed the process of transition from Republic to Empire; it gratified the susceptibilities of the Republican Senators; it salved wounded pride; it disarmed, during the most critical years, active oppposition. Augustus was a typical opportunist in politics, and the name carries with it a certain reproach. Yet every great statesman, who has accomplished anything permanent, has found himself obliged to play the part of the opportunist, to make allowances for prejudice and ignorance, to flatter the vanity of his opponents, and to conciliate their wrath by timely concessions. So long as he is guided by some great principle tending to the general welfare of the State,

such opportunism is really only another name for the statecraft which is an essential feature of statesmanship. And Augustus possessed such a guiding principle, which may be summed up in the one word —Order. He set the Roman world in order. Those who contemptuously dismiss him as a man of second-rate intelligence assuredly forget the magnitude of that task.

His is not an heroic figure. Our sympathies are not irresistibly drawn towards him as they are to the brilliant and versatile Julius. Indeed, he repels rather than attracts. He excites cold approval and respect but kindles no enthusiasm. He was not a visionary or a dreamer—there was no touch of "the practical mystic" in him which we find in men like Napoleon or Cromwell—he was, so far as politics were concerned, wholly practical and without imagination. But these, after all, were the qualities most requisite in the statesman who undertook to "tidy up" the Roman world from the chaos in which it had been left by the civil wars. He succeeded perfectly, and he was, throughout his reign, rather the Managing Director of the Empire than its Emperor. We think of Augustus not as a dazzling central figure upon a throne and not as the Commander-in-Chief of the scattered Roman legions on the Tagus, the Rhine, the Danube, the Euphrates, and the Nile, but as the business man in his private room in the Palace grounds, clad in a work-a-day dress of homespun, busy with despatches from his agents abroad. The well-known lines of Horace give us the truest picture of Augustus:

> " Quum tot sustineas et tanta negotia solus,
> Res Italas armis tuteris, moribus ornes,
> Legibus emendes, in publica commoda peccem,
> Si longo sermone morer tua tempora, Cæsar."

And he was no Philip II. of Spain, patiently and conscientiously blinding himself over official detail which his dull wit could not grasp. Love of detail was his second nature, and the detail all formed part of his great scheme of order and efficiency. Voltaire once described Augustus as " un monstre adroit et heureux "—an excellent example of misapplied terseness of expression, yet containing just a few grains of truth. The cold-blooded calculation and adroitness displayed by Augustus after the battle of Mutina, when he was still in his teens, and his sanction of the great proscription may almost justify the word " monster." But he was then a gamester playing for his life against even more reckless gamesters, who were playing for theirs. It was no time for generosity; as Antonius had said, " Only the winner will live." But it is absurd to judge the Emperor Augustus, who died at the age of seventy-six, by his actions before he was twenty-one, to remember only the proscription and forget that he was known to his countrymen for centuries as the magnanimous and the clement. Calculating and adroit he remained to the end, but these qualities spell statesmanship, and as for his luck, luck in politics is usually the reward of competence and capacity. " We must take the current when it serves, or lose our ventures." Augustus



CAMEO OF AUGUSTUS WITH AN ÆGIS.
FROM THE BRITISH MUSEUM.

took it; Antonius did not. Fortune certainly favoured him, and the phrase "*Sis felicior Augusto*" became the recognised salutation to the Throne. But he deserved fortune because he put himself in Fortune's way. He owed nothing to good luck in his patient reorganisation of the Empire. While others would have remained in Rome to enjoy in ease the fruits of victory, Augustus spent many years in journeying through his dominions and setting the crooked straight. He gave peace within the Empire by battering down all opposition. His methods were often ruthless; they must have caused untold misery among the natives of Spain, northern Italy, and Gaul, for he transported whole tribes from their native homes and sold whole races into slavery. Yet civilisation has reaped the benefit. The rapid and permanent Romanisation of Gaul and Spain was the grand result, in the presence of which History either ignores or condones the crime.

We have said that Augustus was without imagination. Perhaps that is too sweeping a judgment to pass upon the man who rebuilt Rome on so splendid a scale. Yet even here we suspect that his main idea was to impress the imagination of others. The grandeur of Rome was a great business asset of the Empire. It flattered the pride of the Romans; it created a sense of awe among the provincials; it was a sort of visible guarantee that the new *régime* had come to stay. But we suspect that the Emperor took a keener interest in the reports of the Tiber Conservancy Board and the construction of the great military roads over the Alps than he did in the

completion of the various amphitheatres and temples which rose under his guidance in the capital. It was the practical side of the great Imperial idea which appealed most to him. Efficient government, safe frontiers, the opening of new trade routes, and a full exchequer — to secure those was his constant occupation. He had, in a word, the practical imagination which goes to make a successful business man and a practical statesman. Chateaubriand has said that Augustus did not belong to the select company of that first class of men who make revolutions, but rather to the second class who profit by them. There is much truth in that saying. If there had been no Julius, there would have been no Augustus. But this does not derogate from his greatness. His work endured—there lies its justification. He built up the Principate, which became gradually transformed into the Empire. If liberty died in Rome, the capital, a new life arose in the provinces of the west and in Africa. The Hellenism of the eastern portion of the Empire endured as before; it was no part of the Roman mission to destroy the Hellenistic civilisation and replace it by the Roman. Such an attempt was never made; if it had been, it must have failed.

What then was the main result of his work? The answer is clear. He knitted together the Roman world, east and west, into one great organisation of which the Emperor stood as the supreme head. He set his legions upon the distant frontiers and their swords formed a wall of steel within which commerce and peace might flourish. The security was


BRITANNIA
GERMANIA
BELGICA
LUGDUNENSIS
AQUITANIA
Lugdunum
NARBONENSIS
Massilia
LUSITANIA
TARRACONENSIS
Narbo
Tarraco
Corduba
BAETICA
Gades
Carthago Nova
SARDINIA
ITALIA
Roma
MAURETANIA
NUMIDIA
Carthago
SICILIA
AFRICA
AFRICA (REIPUB.)
RAETIA
NORICUM
Danubius F.
PANNONIA
ILLYRICUM
DALMATIA
DACIA
SCYTHIA
MOESIA
PONTUS EUXINUS
CASPIUM MARE
THRACE
MACEDONIA
BITHYNIA
PONTUS
ARMENIA
Artaxata
Araxes F.
MYSIA
LYDIA
PHRYGIA
GALATIA
CAPPADOCIA
Tigris F.
MEDIA
CILICIA
Euphrates F.
PARTHIA
Antiochia
SYRIA
RHODUS
CRETE
CYPRUS
Cyrene
Alexandria
Pelusium
Hierosolyma
Petra
CYRENAICA
LIBYA
AEGYPTUS
Coptos
ARABIA
Berenice
Rough Map
SHOWING THE PROVINCES
of the
ROMAN EMPIRE
at the death of
AUGUSTUS.
Scale of Roman Miles
0 200 400 600 800
W. from Greenw. 0 East from Greenw.
London: Stanford's Geog.l Estab.t

not perpetual, yet it lasted for four centuries, and saved ancient civilisation from destruction. But for the Empire and the system inaugurated by Augustus, there is every probability that the Roman civilisation would have been as thoroughly wiped out in Gaul and Spain, as it was in northern Africa, and as the civilisation of Greece was blotted out in Asia Minor and Syria. We may regret the degeneration of Rome, its loss of freedom, the tyranny of the later Emperors, the civil wars which followed, and the decay of the old martial spirit in the Roman people. But the seeds of degeneration and decay had been planted in the days of the Republic, and would have come to maturity far sooner if there had been no Augustus and no Empire. Augustus started the Roman world on a new career. He made it realise its unity for the first time. That was his life-work, and its consequences are felt to this day.

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